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ABSTRACT

This report characterizes the current state of community service in the United States, discusses actions the Commission on National and Community Service has taken, and sketches some alternatives for the future. An executive summary presents the main themes of the report. Chapter 1 describes the promise of national and community service for the country. Chapter 2 covers the context of national and community service--recent developments in the field and policy arena, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as well as the establishment and early actions of the commission. Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 discuss community service in the four main areas of commission responsibility as defined by the Act: school-age young people (Subtitle B, Part I), higher education (Subtitle B, part II), youth corps (Subtitle C), and national service models (Subtitle D), respectively. Each of these chapters follows the same format: introduction to the promise of community service in the chapter's subject area, description of the situation at the time the commission was established, outline of the commission's early actions, and a view of the way forward by suggesting goals. Chapter 7 describes what a well-developed network of community service opportunities might look like and how the country might develop one. Views of three commission members, Wayne Meisel, George Romney, and Jane A-Kenny, are appended. (YLB)

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What You Can Do For Your Country

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Report of the Commission on National and Community Service

January 1993

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COVER PHOTO—Getting while giving: a teenaged volunteer experiences the joy of companionship with younger kids while teaching them how to read.

What You Can Do For Your Country

Report of the Commission on National and Community Service

January 1993

WHAT YOU
CAN DO FOR YOUR
COUNTRY

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National
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Dedication

To the memory of Joyce Black,
a charter member of the board of directors of
the Commission on National and Community Service,
whose death in June, 1992 created not only
a vacancy on the board, but a desire in the hearts
of her colleagues to extend her influence through
a renewed commitment to the spirit of
service in America.

Preface

Students in Harlem learn about the environment while tilling a garden with community members

What You Can Do For Your Country

"Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." This was President John F. Kennedy's challenge to all Americans in his January 20, 1961 Inaugural Address, as he set the tone for a new era of initiative in tackling difficult problems abroad and at home. And people responded. Not only those who volunteered for the Peace Corps and later VISTA, but others who volunteered for the military, or who sought ways to take their professional training in education, the law, medicine and other fields to the inner cities, to Appalachia and other areas of rural poverty, and to Indian reservations. Indeed, Kennedy's challenge affected the spirit of a whole generation.

Now, 32 years and seven presidents later, Kennedy's question—"What can I do for my country?"—is as important as ever. But it needs to be answered anew. We are entering a new, post-Cold War era, in which our citizens are most concerned about difficult domestic problems—about our economic performance, violence and drugs, racial and class division, the plight of the poor and especially the homeless. Today America is in the grip of a cycle, most serious in our inner cities, of children unprepared to learn going to schools unable to teach them, then floundering at the margins of the productive economy and often becoming parents in such difficult circumstances that their children enter the cycle anew. Underlying all of this and fed by it, is a widespread pessimism about what can be done, and especially about what can be done by government.

Furthermore, America is a work in progress, which means that every generation must answer Kennedy's question for itself.

Our observations all around the country suggest that an important part of this generation's answer, like that of earlier ones, will be community service—voluntary involvement in dealing directly and personally with the social needs and challenges we face. (In this report, we use "community service" to refer to the full scope of service activities—full-time and part-time, occurring in free-standing organizations such as youth corps as well as those integrated in schools and other organizations, or simply as one person reaching out to help others. We reserve the term "national service" for service that represents a major life-commitment—roughly, a year or

more of full-time service, or its equivalent in part-time service over a longer period. In both cases, such service is voluntary. In the great majority of cases, community service is also entirely unpaid; such service has been the backbone of the voluntary sector throughout our history. Nevertheless, there are important instances—especially when volunteers are being asked to forego their livelihoods—in which cost-of-living stipends are appropriate.) What we have seen again and again is that people *want* to make a difference, *want* to help other people, *want* to be asked to help and *want* to be respected for what they contribute.

This strikes us as a very hopeful answer. When people serve, many make great contributions- in providing nurturing attention to a young person who gets little at home or elsewhere, in reinforcing what teachers can do in the classroom, in supporting people who are ill or incapacitated, in developing new services to reach the homeless, the addicted, the abused. And in the act of serving, they often make a decisive difference in their own lives—developing their own knowledge, skills, and character, building relationships with people they would otherwise not have known, escaping the pessimism and powerlessness that besets bystanders, and gaining a sense of personal worth and meaning.

Appreciating this promise, Congress passed the National and Community Service Act of 1990, which set out seven purposes:

1. Renew the ethic of civic responsibility in the United States.

2. Ask citizens..., regardless of age or income, to engage in full-time or part-time service to the nation.

3. Begin to call young people to serve in programs that will benefit the nation and improve the life chances of the young through the acquisition of literacy and job skills.

4. Enable young Americans to make a sustained commitment to service by removing barriers to service that have been created by high education costs, loan indebtedness, and the cost of housing.

5. Build on the existing organizational framework of federal, state, and local programs and agencies to expand full-time and part-time service opportunities for all citizens, particularly youth and older Americans.

6. Involve participants in activities that would not otherwise be performed by employed workers.

7. Generate additional service hours each year to help meet human, educational, environmental and public safety needs, particularly those needs relating to poverty.

The Act authorized creation of a bipartisan Commission on National and Community Service, governed by a 21-member board of directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and charged it with a number of responsibilities, including administration of grant programs in the areas of K-12 schools, higher education, youth corps, and national service models. The Commission was blessed with a bill expressing a broad and flexible definition of national service, offering an opportunity to serve through organized groups or individual placements.

The Act requires the Commission to submit an annual report to Congress covering the programs that receive grants, together with Commission findings and actions taken as a result of evaluation of grantee programs. Since states and their sub-grantees are still early in the implementation process there are no completed evaluations this year. Such reporting will be contained in our report for 1993. The Act also requires the Commission to "advise the President and the Congress concerning developments in national and community service that merit the attention of the President and the Congress." That is the principal purpose of this first report of the Commission.

In this report, drawing on all that we have learned during our first year as a Commission, we attempt to communicate our understanding of the promise service holds for America, summarize what we have learned about the current state of community service in the country, and indicate what actions the Commission has taken. We have come to understand that we have not developed a national service network; we have uncovered the beginings of one.

Knowing that the Congress and the President will be giving thoughtful attention to the role that national and community service should play in this country's future, we also sketch our current views about the way forward, and set out for consideration goals for the development of community service in the country in the next decade and early steps that could be taken toward achievement of those goals.

What we have to learn about the field far exceeds what we have learned to date, and in the course of the next months and years, we are certain to gain knowledge that could lead us to modify our views. Nonetheless, we believe that we have an obligation to share our best thinking now—and then to communicate mistakes as well as successes, new ideas and changed appreciation of reality as they emerge. In the coming year, the Commission will begin to receive results from evaluations and other sources that will undoubtedly affect what we understand when we come to prepare our second report.

This report draws principally on our experience and that of staff in implementing the Act, including numerous site visits, on consultations with our grantees and others in the field, and on recent hearings we have held in Los Angeles, CA, Minneapolis, MN, and Washington, D.C. The quotations in the margins of the report reflect some of the diversity of views we have already heard.

The structure of the report is as follows:

- ***The Executive Summary*** presents the main messages of the report, without illustration or elaboration.
- ***Chapter 1*** describes the promise of national and community service for the country.
- ***Chapter 2*** covers the background of national and community service—recent developments in the field and the policy arena, as well as the establishment and early actions of the Commission.
- ***Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6*** discuss community service in the four main areas of Commission responsibility: school-age young people, higher education, youth corps, and national service models, respectively. In each chapter, we follow the same plan: Introduce the promise of community service in that area, describe the current situation at the time the Commission was established, outline the Commissions early actions, and sketch our view of the way forward.
- ***Chapter 7*** describes what a well-developed network of community service opportunities in America might look like and how the country might develop one.

Also available is a staff discussion paper that sketches one scenario for the development of a national service program, with particular attention to cost. We have prepared this not as a recommendation, but as a baseline point of reference for discussion.

The Commission has also prepared a document, "Information Packet on Grant Recipients and other Commission Actions," which summarizes all Commission funding actions in the course of its first year.

Acknowledgements

While this report is the product and responsibility of all members of the Commission, special gratitude is owed to its first Chair, Pete McCloskey, and to the report subcommittee chaired by Les Lenkowsky and composed of Father Bill Byron, Thomas Ehrlich, Alan Khazei, and Shirley Sagawa. Additionally, the report would not have been possible without the dedicated hard work and patience of the Commission's report team led by Julien Phillips and assisted by Gail Donovan, Sabrina Gee, Don Gips, Kim Grose, Scott Shuger, and Maura Wolf. Thanks are also due to the Commission staff and its Executive Director, Catherine Milton.

Executive Summary

Big or small, short or tall — all young people can help change our communities.

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In 1990 Congress passed the National and Community Service Act, which recognized the need for a renewal of the ethic of civic responsibility in the United States. The Act authorized the creation of a Commission, governed by a bipartisan 21-member board of directors, and charged it with numerous responsibilities including the making of grants in four areas: K-12 schools, higher education, youth corps, and national service models. Congress appropriated $75 million for fiscal year 1992.

During its first year of operation, the Commission received 504 applications from 388 applicants for $226 million in these four areas, and made 154 grants totaling $63 million. In addition, the Commission has either made, or is making, grants for innovative projects concerned with Foster Grandparents in Head Start centers, the Peace Corps and an effort related to historically black colleges and universities, rural youth, retirees and volunteer service, and special state governors' initiatives, and for one or more regional service learning clearinghouses. It assisted in the development of the President's Youth Service Awards program and an Executive Order calling on federal agency heads to encourage their employees to participate in community service. It selected a specialized firm to evaluate grantee programs. It took initial steps to build working partnerships with grantees and others in the field of community service, and to facilitate shared learning among community service leaders. Nevertheless, much remains to be done.

The Act requires the Commission to submit an annual report to Congress covering the programs that receive grants, and to "advise the President and the Congress concerning developments in national and community service that merit attention." (As stated in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, Pub. L-101-610, Section 190(c)(1).) This first report concentrates mainly on the second of those tasks, since states and their subgrantees are still early in the implementation process.

In this report we characterize the current state of community service in the country, discuss the grants and other actions the Commission has taken, and sketch some alternatives about the way forward. (We use the term "community service" to refer to the full scope of service activities—full-time and part-time, unpaid and stipended, occurring in free-standing

organizations such as youth corps as well as those integrated in schools and other community or service organizations, or simply as one person reaching out to help others. We reserve the term "national service" for service that represents a major life-commitment—roughly, a year or more of full-time service, or its equivalent in part-time service over a longer period.) The report is based on field visits by board members and staff, consultations with many people active in community service, and hearings on national and community service held in December, 1992 in Minneapolis, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

This report is intended to be a useful contribution to the nationwide dialogue on national and community service that is already well underway.

We have published a separate document that gives the details of all grants made and actions taken by the Commission to date. Also available is a staff discussion paper on national service expansion.

1—The Promise of National and Community Service

Although we recognize the large-scale contributions of adult and senior citizen volunteers, and envision them to be a major part of a network of community service opportunities, this report, reflecting the Commission's initial priority, focuses largely on youth service. Examples in this chapter illustrate how engaging young people in productive service can build self-esteem and self-discipline, develop practical skills, establish bonds of community, inculcate a sense of civic responsibility, and provide something valuable to others.

What's more, youth service can be a potent form of "social judo." Unemployment, crime, drugs, social disintegration—these problems are bad for all, but worst for our young people. As examples in this chapter demonstrate, community service can turn the citizens most burdened by these problems into important parts of the solution.

What is needed, more than any specific service program, is a culture of service and a network of community service opportunities, open to and inviting to all, from kindergarten through adulthood.

2—A Context for Action

This chapter reports on how the Commission's work had a great deal on which to build, both in the traditions of our country and its people, and in the momentum of a revitalized youth service movement that has been gathering strength for more than a decade.

The diverse currents of the resurgent youth service movement are springing up from state and local, public and private initiatives all around the country. As promising as this movement is, many programs are new and small, funding is often tenuous, and there is too little supporting infrastructure and evaluation.

The Commission adopted a strategic vision that stresses integrating community service into the fabric of American life. The Commission defined three main strategies: encouraging model programs, developing leaders and organizational infrastructure, and contributing to visionary, coalition-building leadership of the field.

We appreciate that our own role is limited, not only because our financial contribution is a relatively small share of the total being spent on community service at present, but also because federal agencies have been notably unsuccessful at solving local community problems. But even in a limited role, the actions of the federal government can make an important contribution to the state of community service.

3—The Formative Years: Service Learning Among School-Age Youth (The Act's Subtitle B, Part I)

Several schools around the country have already made learning through service an integral part of the regular school curriculum. And youth-serving organizations and community-based groups increasingly view young people as resources for the community rather than as simply recipients needing services themselves.

A recent survey reported that 61 percent of 12-17-year-olds volunteered an average of 3.2 hours per week in 1991. Research and evaluation studies of service learning in schools are limited, but they consistently tend to show positive results for both server and served. However, available information suggests that service learning activities are reaching relatively few children during their time in school.

To seed further growth and expansion, the Commission in the last year distributed $16.2 million to 47 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto

Rico, 3 Indian tribes, and 5 local organizations. (This sum represents 75 percent of the $22.5 million appropriation for Subtitle B, which also includes higher education.) Some funds went to eight states designated as "leader states," capable of serving as models and resources for other grantees.

For improving school-age service, we put forward two goals for consideration:

1. ***Elementary, middle, and high schools in which service is a central practice across the curriculum should exist in every state and major metropolitan area.***

2. ***All middle school students should have the opportunity to participate, ideally during the summer, in an intensive community service program, at least once before high school.***

Achieving these goals would require, among other steps, developing innovative leaders and the level of service in schools, supporting service learning coordinators, training teachers in service learning, and building or supporting existing state or regional resource centers.

4—Community Service in Higher Education (Subtitle B, Part II)

Higher education can be a cornerstone for the broad-based, life-long network of community service opportunities that we would like to see in this country. And service experiences during this critical period of growth can have a powerful impact on people's choices concerning careers and life interests.

Although the seeds of some town/gown partnerships were planted in the 19th century, since the 1980s a surge of activity has been carrying the college community service movement beyond its earlier base. There are no aggregate statistics, but we know that last year more than 140,000 students at Campus Compact's 305 member schools participated in weekly service. The Campus Outreach Opportunity League works with students and faculty at 650 institutions, and 150 schools provide academic credit for service learning programs offered by the Partnership for Service Learning. And there are countless local and national, student-initiated service programs. But the potential of the 14.2 million students in higher education and their 3600 institutions has just begun to be tapped.

The Commission awarded 58 grants totaling $5.1 million for programs in over 200 colleges and universities. Most fell into one of four categories: supporting multi-institution programs and infrastructure, putting service learning into teacher training, encouraging innovative models of tutoring and mentoring, and sponsoring innovative projects in other areas.

Here, we also put forward two goals for consideration:

1. ***Most colleges and universities in the country should be offering a wide variety of opportunities for students to do worthwhile service in their communities.*** To do so, they are likely to need active community service centers.

2. ***Institutions of higher education in every state and metropolitan area should be making substantial contributions to meeting key public priorities:*** school reform, community revitalization, and leadership development for the community service field.

5—Youth Corps: Reconnecting America's Youth (Subtitle C)

Youth corps (generally full-time, stipended programs) can offer young people a lot, especially the "forgotten half" of our young people who don't go to college, the 10 million 16- to 24-year-olds who don't have jobs and aren't in school, the military, or prison. At their best, they encourage a service ethic, help corpsmembers develop job skills and disciplines, and create a sense of community. Among the ingredients of good corps are active service learning built into everything the corps do, a variety of worthwhile work assignments—including some in education and human services, and attention to the development of marketable skills.

In 1991, 58 state and local corps (in 26 states plus the District of Columbia) provided service opportunities to approximately 13,500 young people in year-round programs and another 4600 in summer programs. In addition, a few corps provided part-time opportunities to about 1000 young people. The average annual cost per corpsmember is between $15,000 and $20,000.

Half the states don't have a single corps and most of those in existence operate on a shoestring and are hard-pressed to provide the corps experience needed for maximum impact on corpsmembers. Funding and attrition are chronic problems of most corps.

The Commission awarded approximately $22.5 million in grants to 24 states and localities, and six Indian tribes—some to be used for starting new corps, some for strengthening established programs, and some for special disaster relief grants. The states in turn are awarding subgrants to local corps. Our impression is that the corps could have profitably used at least twice the level of funding we were able to provide.

We put forward two goals for consideration:

1. ***Enable all established corps to achieve high quality in four key areas critical to ensuring meaningful service experiences for corps members:*** quality of assignments, service learning, preparation for post-service life, and staff development.

2. ***Expand substantially the number of opportunities available for young people to serve in youth corps.***

6—National Service: From Theory to Practice (Subtitle D)

Subtitle D of the Act charges the Commission with making grants to states or Indian tribes for "the creation of full- and part-time national and community service programs" that will "serve as effective model(s) for a large-scale national service program." Congress appropriated $22.5 million to fund such grants (and related activities, such as training and evaluation) during fiscal year 1992. Last year, the Commission granted funds to eight programs to test a variety of different answers to the principal questions usually raised about national service.

Based on the limited amount we already know, we can provide some help in answering questions that the Administration and Congress may soon have to consider:

Why national service? In general, the best programs seem to address four objectives in combination: Addressing unmet social needs, enhancing personal development and building skills and employability of the participants, bringing diverse participants together on the common ground of service to others, and providing the people to strengthen and knit together the community service network as a whole.

Who would serve? In our view, community service opportunities should be available to all, but the initial expansion of national service should focus mainly on youth.

In what kind of program would people serve? A network of diverse, locally-based programs would respond best to America's great variety of needs and circumstances and to the variety of capabilities and interests of prospective volunteers. Such activities would include some federally-operated programs, as well as ones that are operated by state and local governments and by private organizations.

What work would volunteers do? They would perform a wide variety of roles in the four areas set out in Subtitle D of the Act—education, human services, public safety, and the environment.

Should service be mandatory or voluntary? It should be voluntary, though participation ideally would be widespread. Participants are likely to be most committed and effective when they have made a positive decision to volunteer.

Should participants in national service receive stipends? In our view, volunteers should receive cost-of-living stipends for programs of full-time and equivalent part-time service. Volunteers must have enough to live on, or the opportunity to serve will be available only to the well-off. Furthermore, post-service benefits for educational and training expenses would be useful.

How would national service be funded? Using one scenario, the Commission estimates that the total annual cost for 100,000 national service participants would probably be in the range of $2 billion. If the funding partnership provided for in the Act is followed, the incremental cost to the federal government would be substantially less than that amount.

Our observation of current programs and our analysis of the main challenges lead us to believe that it would be feasible to expand the number of worthwhile national service opportunities to approximately 100,000 within a few years, if Congress elects to appropriate the amount of money necessary. In order to expand well, at least four key challenges would have to be met: leadership development, program development, training and support, and network coordination.

7—Building the Community Service Network

The Commission looks forward to the day when community service is so integrated into the fabric of American life, involving thousands of institutions both public and private, that it engages millions of Americans in dealing with critical social problems at the local level.

This chapter describes some communities that are well along the way toward building community service networks. The networks are being funded by a range of interested parties, including organizations such as schools and parks whose mission is supported by community service integrated into the way they do their work; public and private organizations concerned with youth development; all levels of government; and foundations, corporations, and individual citizens. In spurring new program development, the federal government's role includes fostering local innovative programs and network builders.

Building the community service network we envision would call for leadership at all levels. However, the President, supported by other federal leaders, could make a crucial contribution by placing community service squarely on the agenda for national renewal. Several initiatives would help: Engaging the heads of our major institutions in community service leadership, encouraging concrete initiatives by federal departments and agencies to make optimal use of community service approaches, and calling on all Americans to participate in an annual Serve America Day.

If America is able to stimulate and support the development of a more effective community service ethic, the expansion of community service opportunities, and the broadening and strengthening of organizational infrastructure and leadership, then young people—in fact, all Americans—will have ample answers to the question: What can you do for your country?

The Promise of National and Community Service

Chapter 1

High school volunteers pitching in on Earth Day

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What You Can Do For Your Country

"When I assumed this great office, I pledged to do all I could to honor, encourage, and increase volunteer efforts....If I could leave but one legacy to this country it would not be found in policy papers, or even in treaties signed, or even in wars won. It would be in...a rekindling of that light from within that reveals America as it truly is—...a country of millions of Points of Light."

President George Bush

For more than 15 years, there was a secret up on Parker Street in the Mission Hill section of Boston. The dope dealers, their money rolls big in their pockets, strutted right by it every day completely unaware. Some of their best junkie customers would sit right on top of it to snort or shoot without having a clue. And even though their windows and doors opened right onto it, the regular neighborhood folks, the ones trying to hold a job and raise a family, didn't know about it either.

The secret was this: Hidden beneath the 15 years' worth of weeds, vines, broken bottles, spent syringes, and trash on the square city block at the corner of Parker and Tremont street, was a garden. A Boston organization named City Year discovered that secret garden and made it grow again.

City Year, one of eight national service models funded by this Commission, is an urban youth corps comprised of about 200 young people, ages 17-23, from all ethnic and economic backgrounds, who come together for a year of full-time community service throughout Boston. Every day, City Year teams of ten or so members are holding tutoring sessions and violence prevention workshops in the schools, running after-school programs for latch-key kids, assisting the elderly, conducting environmental projects, or rehabilitating housing for the homeless. Every corps member is required to register to vote, obtain a library card, produce a resume, complete a workshop in tax preparation, and if they are not high school graduates, earn a GED (a high school equivalency certificate) before the end of the year. Corpsmembers receive $100 a week, and $5,000 towards their education at the completion of their year of service.

City Year was founded in 1988 by Michael Brown and Alan Khazei (Khazei is a member of the Commission board). "Today, with the end of the Cold War," Brown says, "America knows that its greatest challenges are here in our own backyard: Homelessness, AIDS, infant mortality, illiteracy, drug trafficking, dissolution of community and family, and cynicism. National service is the missing link in American democracy—the engine to generate the will to solve these problems, and the meeting ground for all Americans." Khazei foresees a not-too-distant future when, "In Boston,

among the vice-presidents of businesses, the labor leaders, the teachers, the nurses, there will be plenty of City Year alumni. So they'll be comfortable with each other. And we'll have a mayor out of this program someday."

That mayor could be Selvin Chambers. He's the 29-year-old head of the team that put a garden back on Parker Street. Chambers grew up with eight siblings in a public housing project, went away to school on a basketball scholarship, and settled into a comfortable counseling job at a small Massachusetts community college. But after four years of that, he knew something was missing. What he's found at City Year is a way to be a leader making a big difference in young people's lives and in the community they serve together. He took a $2,600 pay cut to become a City Year team leader, and he's having the time of his life.

When Chambers first saw the Parker Street site, he took pictures of it from every angle. Pictures of the waist-high piles of rubble. Pictures of the weeds so thick they had made the perimeter cyclone fence as opaque as brick. Then the makeover was begun by Chambers and his team: black, white, and Hispanic kids from Roxbury, Dorchester, and Peabody; a well-to-do kid from Jay Gatsby's neck of Long Island, and a Vietnamese immigrant; strangers before all this, but now friends with a job to do. They cut down and bagged up the brush, they removed a mountain of litter, they dug out rocks, they tilled and mulched the soil, and they planted flowers and vegetables. When they discovered a big pile of bricks underneath all the debris, they agreed on how to use them as a system of walkways, and then built it. Once before, in the middle seventies, this parcel of land had been a public garden. Now, after eight days of back-breaking teamwork, it was a garden again.

As the Parker Street garden re-emerged, so did its neighbors. One lady began letting her child play there. Now that the cyclone fence was transparent again, she could watch him from her kitchen window. The fellow in the big white clapboard house started doing some long-delayed home repairs. Passersby began arranging to get a little garden space within to till for themselves. And a 74-year-old man named Fred, who lives down the street, began coming in after the City Year team had quit for the day. Was he a doper or a boozer eager to reclaim his turf? No—Fred loves gardening. Every morning, where there had only been stark black soil the night before, the team would find another row of fresh marigolds.

"I want to see an America where service is a way of life....I think of schools where young people are called not only to academic achievement but to volunteer work in hospitals and nursing homes, tutoring programs and homeless shelters as a fundamental component of education."

President-elect
Bill Clinton

"Community volunteer service has never been more needed, particularly in the inner cities where inadequate tax base, lack of two-parent families, poverty, drugs, crime, imperiled schools, dilapidated buildings and a loss of a sense of community create the greatest need. There's a war out there, and more individual volunteers and an infrastructure to support them are clearly needed."

Pete McCloskey
Board member
Commission on National and Community Service

On the eighth and final day of the project, Selvin Chambers showed his "before" pictures to his team. They were astounded at the difference they'd made. And Chambers admits he was a little surprised too. After all, he'd never done any gardening before.

These days, we do not read many stories like this about young people. Pick up any newspaper, turn on any television show, and it is hard to avoid stories about youth and crime, youth and drugs, teen pregnancy, high school dropout rates, and youth unemployment. The statistics are grim: approximately 400,000 children drop out of school each year, 1 million get pregnant, and 1.8 million are victims of violent crime.

The story about the Parker Street garden is not only a heartwarming contrast to all those stories about seemingly intractable problems. In addition, it illustrates that done well, youth service not only changes vacant lots or other tangible things. It also changes lives.

City Year is but one illustration of the profound value of service. There are many such examples across this country in a wide variety of settings, paid and unpaid, full-time and part-time, beginning in elementary school and running through adulthood.

Consider for instance, Hawthorne Elementary School in Seattle, a school with a considerable socioeconomic and ethnic mix, a school where community service is an integral part of almost everything. It has a volunteer program through which parents provide classroom help, staff the computer lab and the library, and monitor and supervise lunch and playground periods. The school's volunteer coordinator has seen parents who, as a result of their participation, have gotten closer to their kids; for some volunteer parents, that has been the key to getting off drugs. The volunteer program also administers Hawthorne's food and clothing bank, which serves both the school's kids and others in the community who don't have enough. Much of the bank's inventory comes from service projects conducted by Hawthorne classes.

For instance, teacher Steve Hansen's kindergartners rented an apple press, made and sold cider, and took the proceeds to a nearby Safeway and bought food in bulk for the needy. In the process they learned something about nutrition and unit-pricing. And Hansen's class also struck up a special relationship with a nearby nursing home. Each of his students was paired with a resident, and twice a month they visited their "grandperson," bringing gifts and staying to play games and talk. The kids also brought tapes of stories they'd read aloud for their elderly friends to listen to. And the residents made a trip to Hawthorne for a tour and lunch and a play Hansen's students put on just for them. At the end of last year, the kids put together an illustrated book about the project, which Hansen pub-

lished in hardcover. What did they learn? "I learned that we should love and care for them," read one student's entry in the book, under his drawing of two smiling people next to each other, one in a wheelchair.

Meanwhile, up in Hawthorne's computer lab, the fourth graders are paired off one-to-one with the kindergartners, one and all having a blast covering the basics using "Counting Critters" and "Arithmetic Critters." At one monitor, the tutor and tutee are going over the material in their native Cambodian language, Minh, a language no Hawthorne staff member speaks. "That could never happen in the classroom," observes one teacher. "That's better than any of us can do."

Such examples as these have convinced the members of the Commission that service can literally transform America–the lives of our young people, the strength of our communities, the spirit of our nation as a whole.

And the need for transformation is certainly there. Take Paco Meserve, for instance, one of the Parker Street garden-makers. Now 20, has been on his own since he was 13. Living a few weeks here, a few weeks there, he's attended eight different high schools. An ex-gang leader, he's been stabbed and shot at. His best friend died in his arms.

Or Orlando Chappelle, a twenty-six year-old man who recently spoke to Commission board members at a presentation given by a Washington, D.C. neighborhood improvement organization. Each of Orlando's three brothers was killed in drug-related shootings on the streets of the nation's capital. His buddy J.J. Johnson has been the pallbearer at the funerals of half a dozen friends. "I'd rather be dead than 18 or 19 today," said an older man at the presentation.

All too many of our inner city youth are, like Paco, J.J., and Orlando, living in shocking circumstances for late twentieth century America—in deteriorating neighborhoods, often victims of racism, lacking the financial means to enjoy the "good life" that television trumpets—or even to meet basic needs for decent food, clothing, housing, and health care, and constantly exposed to intimidation and violence. They are often dealt with as problems to be managed—by their schools, by shop owners, by service agencies, by the police. Some have nurturing family relationships, involvements in religious communities, or close links with a teacher or a leader in an organization outside of school—but many more have no stable, respectful, caring relationships with adults. And there is no evident way out: So many of them are ill-equipped to learn in school, and so many of their

At one computer monitor, a fourth grade tutor and a kindergartner tutee are going over material in their native Cambodian language, Minh, a language no staff member speaks. "That could never happen in the classroom," observes one teacher. "That's better than any of us can do."

These corps members are having fun while making a real impact on the neighborhoods of Boston.

schools are ill-equipped to help them become knowledgeable and competent members of society, and their job prospects are limited both in number and quality. For many of the rural poor, the situation is not much different.

It is no surprise that so many of these young people feel isolated and alienated, get little joy from their present, have little hope for their future, and possess low self-esteem. Nor is it surprising that they strive to overcome their alienation by seeking strong bonds with peers—which can lead to problems with drug abuse, pregnancy, and crime.

Although few middle class or upper-middle class youth live in such difficult circumstances, their lives too have been hit hard by social trends like the rise in family moves, dramatically increased single-parent and two-earner families, and the ready availability of alcohol and drugs. To a remarkable extent, they too have been isolated from the broader community of adults. Also, middle class flight from the cities and the economic segregation of neighborhoods isolates many middle class youth from the diverse reality of the new America. And what opportunities there are for personal and social development, for self-expression, and for employment fail to engage them.

The demons stalking the lives of these young people are the gravest threat to their future and ours. Left unthwarted, they will in time turn every garden in our national life into a useless snarl of trash. "Don't think *they're* in trouble," Ann Wilson, a mother whose teenage son was murdered in 1991, told Commission members, referring to his generation and that of his killers, "Don't think *I'm* in trouble. *We're* in trouble."

In his recent testimony, J.J. Johnson, who wants to be a public school teacher but whose attempts to finish college have thus far been stymied by financial problems, sent a clear signal to the Commission. When asked if, in return for student loan forgiveness, he would give two years to national service, his answer came without a second's hesitation: "Yes."

Would J.J.'s friends, Orlando's brothers or Ann Wilson's son still be alive today if a youth service corps had gotten to them before the streets did? No one knows. But we don't want to lose so much of another generation before we find out.

The extraordinary value of the experiences found in abundance in good youth service programs is worth elaborating upon:

- ***Youth service can build community.*** When young people from different racial, ethnic, economic, and educational circumstances work together in close quarters, they come to trust each other and depend on each other, and then they begin to notice that their lives are richer for knowing people different from themselves. As the garden project shows, the service may also invigorate the wider community.
- ***Youth service can build up the young people themselves.*** Young people are asked to do something important, something that matters, something that will make a difference in the world. They gain self-satisfaction from having done it well, and respect from others—including adults—from whom they had been isolated. Such an experience transforms who they are—in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others. Community service is not something done *for* young people; it's something done *by* young people. By serving, they can become planners and doers and leaders. They become valued, competent resources, rather than clients of schools and police and other social institutions.

Being in a tutoring program means having another friend at school.

> Do young people want to leave the streets and the underground economy to become involved in community service? If Boston is any example, they're desperate to....With virtually no publicity, YouthBuild turns away ten young people for every one that it is able to accept.
>
> Jackie Gelb
> Director
> YouthBuild Boston,
> at Commission hearings,
> Washington, D.C.

- ***Youth service can build practical skills and disciplines.*** Motivated by the value and challenge of the work and the obvious need to do it well, and by the appreciation of others, community service participants learn skills and work disciplines that will be of great benefit to their future lives. They develop the mind-set and abilities needed to solve problems and work productively in groups of people with diverse backgrounds—critical qualities for success in the emerging economy and society.
- ***Youth service can inculcate a sense of civic responsibility.*** The young people involved come to appreciate the value of the community and the contribution they make to it, and they develop a lasting commitment to do their part, and do it well.

In short, youth service, whether full-time or part-time, can make a decisive difference in helping young people become self-confident members of society, productive workers, and valuable and committed citizens. This country already enjoys the service of many Americans of all ages and would benefit immeasurably from an increase in service among every generation, but in light of the social problems and the powers of service just noted, the Commission believes youth service deserves special emphasis at this time.

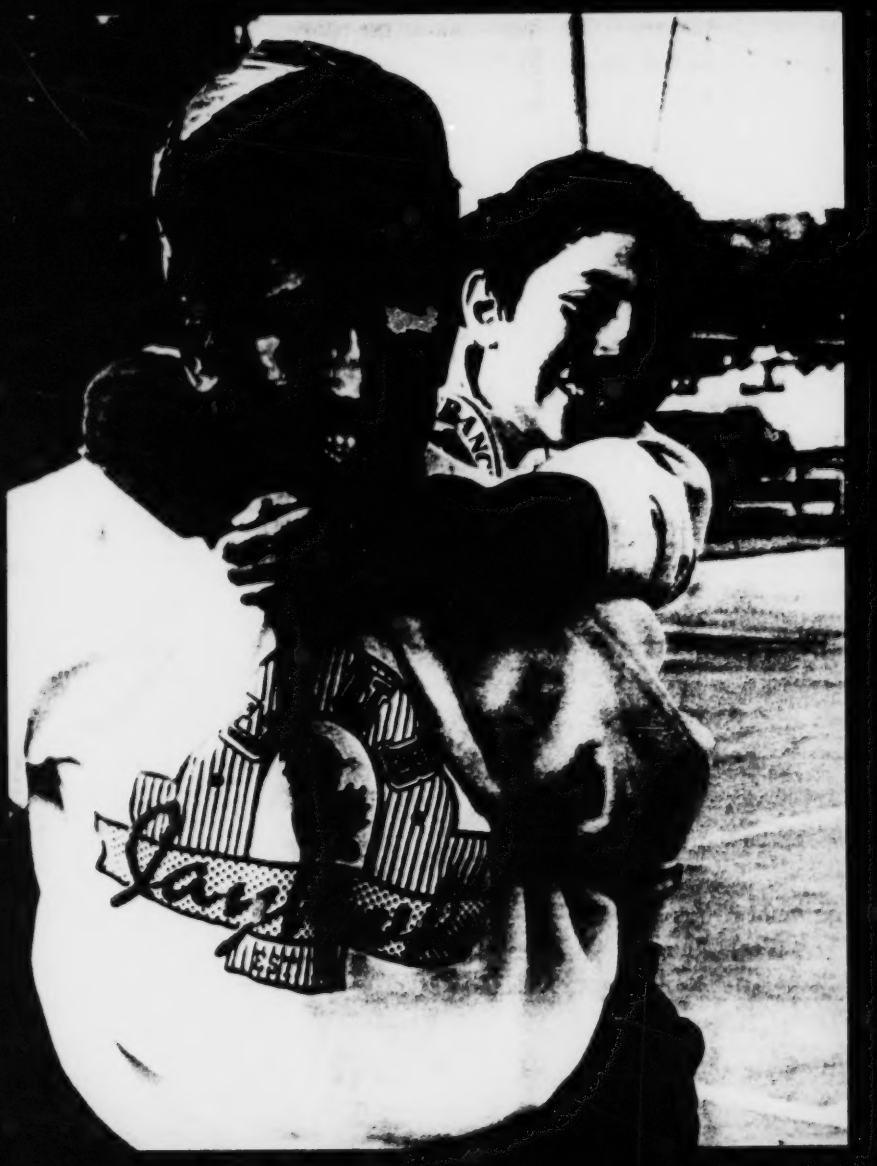
Engaging young people in productive and rewarding service will not by itself solve all our social problems. But the more young people are involved, the more they are likely to become convinced that "I matter," that "we can make a difference," that "hey, my life is headed somewhere." And this is the general truth about service: It is not a panacea—it does not solve all problems or eliminate all frictions and frustrations—but it does tend to give new meaning to lives, it does tend to build stronger bonds of community. And these are great goods all by themselves, as well as being powerful forces for dealing with other problems.

But this transformation is likely to come only if the country can encourage, not a specific service program, limited to a specific time and set of participants, but rather a spirit of service and a network of community service opportunities, known to and available to all who wish to participate.

This is not an unrealistic vision—it's one we attempt to articulate in the pages to come. All over the country, pieces of this vision are already reality; they need only to come together and multiply. As they do, the bonds of community that bind all Americans together, in all of our rich diversity, will strengthen and enrich our lives. An increasing number of young people may come to feel that they are important and valued parts of their communities and will experience a concomitant increase in their self-esteem. In addition, they will learn better in school and will develop skills and disciplines relevant to employment and the other activities of adult life. And our gardens will grow.

A Context for Action

Chapter 2



Many college students serve as mentors, coaches, and big brothers and sisters—offering attention and guidance to young people who otherwise get little one-on-one time with anyone.

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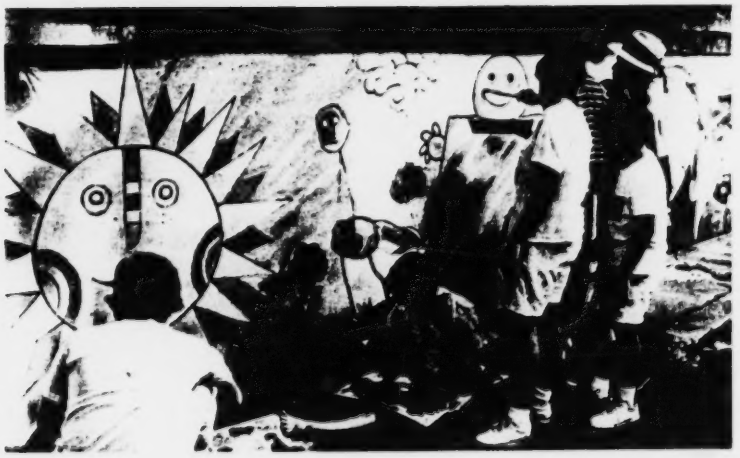
Programs like City Year and Hawthorne Elementary School did not come out of thin air. They had a great deal to build on, both in the traditions of our country and its people, and in the momentum of a revitalized service movement that has been gathering strength for more than a decade.

The first section below provides an introduction to the contemporary service movement, and the next outlines the policy context that has taken shape in the last decade. The third section discusses how our recently formed Commission on National and Community Service has begun to contribute to the further development of this movement.

The Resurgent Service Movement

There's been a resurgence in service in this country, especially among the young. Saying this can be misleading, because a tradition of mutual aid and service runs like a bright thread through the entire history of the United States. From the shared harvests of the early colonists to the shared burdens of the early slaves, from the barn-raisings and quilting bees of the Westward migration to the city settlement houses of the great northward immigration, from the strong volunteer base of service organizations in every community in the country (until recently composed predominantly of women, at a time when job opportunities for women were limited) to the committed participation of the civil rights movement, America has long been a country where people faced with a problem instinctively asked, "What can we do about it?" and then voluntarily and cooperatively organized a response.



Young people from the Latin American Youth Center in Washington, D.C. take to the streets—armed with paint and energy.

Today, millions of Americans serve through their religious groups, through voluntary service organizations of many different kinds - from hospices to hospital auxiliaries, from Junior League to Kiwanis; from the National Council of Jewish Women to the Urban League; as leaders of 4-H and Little League, Girl Scouts and Big Brothers; in food banks and

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homeless shelters, AIDS support groups and Twelve-Step mutual-help groups. Not to mention the informal help neighbor gives neighbor, worker gives worker, friend gives friend.

Our tradition of citizen service has had an important governmental side as well. From the citizen militia of the Revolutionary War to the all-volunteer force of the Persian Gulf War, citizen service has been the backbone of every military action in this country's history. Major civilian governmental service initiatives have become symbols of whole eras: the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, the Peace Corps and VISTA in the 1960s and 70s. More recently, Foster Grandparents and other older American volunteer programs have enlisted many senior citizens.

Adult volunteers performed an estimated 21 billion hours of service in 1991, according to a survey conducted for the Independent Sector by the Gallup Organization. An estimated 51% of adults 18 and older volunteered an average of 4.2 hours per week. Another Gallup-Independent Sector survey found 61% of teenagers 12 to 17 years of age volunteered an average of 3.2 hours a week, giving an approximate total of 2.1 billion hours. It has been estimated that nearly six million Americans over the age of 65—nearly one quarter of this whole age group—engage in volunteer activities, and two million more would like to do so.

Although this report focuses largely on youth service, we recognize that adult and senior volunteer programs are a central part of the existing community service network we hope will grow and flourish.

Into this rich tradition of citizen service in America, some important new youth service currents are flowing:

- Nearly 70 youth service corps have been established since 1976 in states and local communities around the country—engaging out-of-school young people in community service.
- The 1980s saw a renaissance of college student involvement in service, as many young people moved from political action to ways of having a more direct impact on local social problems and college presidents organized nationally to assist.
- Recent college graduates have founded a number of service coalitions focused on such issues as hunger, homelessness, and illiteracy.

> I'm tutoring the President of the United States. He's six years old and he has been in six foster homes but he's going to be president someday.
>
> ▼
>
> Katie Walker
> Senior citizen volunteer, at Commission hearings, Los Angeles

- At the K-12 level, a new generation of thinking and initiative is emerging that positions community service in the regular curriculum, and not just as an extra-curricular activity or an adjunct to a civics course.
- Long-established youth-serving organizations such as 4-H and Girl Scouts are reaching further into the inner city, towns and rural communities, giving new emphasis to engaging young people in serious service activity.
- Many issue-specific national organizations have enhanced their work by providing wider roles for young people's service—Habitat for Humanity, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Children's Defense Fund, to mention just a few.

Service, such as the ESL tutoring pictured here, is a meeting place for different ethnic groups and different generations.

Several things about these developments are striking. First, they are springing up from individual initiatives around the country; they are tremendously diverse in their adaptation to local needs and circumstances; most of the organizations are entrepreneurial in character, results-driven, and flexible. Second, activities in several of these developments give special emphasis to the involvement of inner-city youth, a neglected group in most earlier service activities. Third, in most, young people play a more active role in leadership than is characteristic of earlier youth service efforts. Fourth, most are designed to meet an important social need and to augment the learning and development of the young people serving.

The Policy Context

The resurgent youth service movement is certainly not emerging in a vacuum. In fact, the federal cutbacks that began in 1980 in funding for youth service and other social programs tended to encourage local initiative. In reaction to the era's talk of the "me generation" and the growing materialism of the young, leaders at the grassroots level launched many new service activities.

There were also important intellectual currents stimulating youth service. At least since the 1974 Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee, chaired by James Coleman, authorities have expressed deep concern about the process of growing up in America and have suggested that greater involvement in service is an important part of the answer.

Within the past four years, at least eight national commission reports on children and youth have urged communities and schools to develop service opportunities for young people (see box on page 14).

While research and evaluation on the benefits of youth service are limited, there is evidence that high school students participating in community service gain significant benefits in terms of self-esteem, personal and social responsibility, and problem-solving. Positive findings in such areas as tutoring and youth corps are also encouraging.

Since 1979 there has been a series of legislative initiatives regarding youth service, although only one came to fruition before 1990. This was the Student Literacy Corps created in 1988, which enables college students to serve as literacy tutors for credit.

During the 1988 presidential campaign, George Bush spoke of the "brilliant diversity" of voluntary associations and service organizations in America, the "thousand points of light in a broad and peaceful sky," and he promised to establish a national service foundation "to work with local community- and school-based programs to involve teenagers and young adults in volunteer service to meet the needs of their own and of nearby communities." When Mr. Bush became President in 1989, these themes came together as the Points of Light Foundation, which merged with the National Volunteer Center, the leading organization in the country focused on mobilizing voluntary community service. Today the Foundation works through the media and its local Volunteer Centers to encourage all citizens to serve, provides leaders of business and other institutions with proven ideas and tools for mobilizing voluntary service, sponsors young people as YES Ambassadors in several states to spark youth initiatives, and seeks to place community service at the center of efforts to achieve educational reform.

President Bush also established the first White House Office of National Service, which has encouraged leaders throughout society to promote involvement in service, honored individuals and organizations pursuing exemplary service initiatives by conferring Daily and Annual Points of Light Awards, encouraged all federal agencies to support voluntary service

In 1989, a flurry of youth service bills were introduced in Congress. In 1990, the sponsors got together to draft a new legislative initiative. The bill passed on November 16, 1990, as the National and Community Service Act. It included four main grant programs: for school-age young people, higher education, youth corps, and national service demonstration models.

Excerpts about Service from Other Reports

"That people need to help and care for one another is an idea as old as the first human communities and equally valid for a modern mass society. But too many Americans, especially the young, feel a debilitating sense of powerlessness in the face of large national and world issues that affect their lives but elude their control. The Commission believes this sense of futility, and the consequent preoccupation with self, can be redirected into an ethic of service and commitment to others. When young people have a chance to act on their humanitarian ideals, they build self-respect and strong attachments to family and community."

— The W.T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship, *The Forgotten Half* (1988).

"The National Commission on Children urges public and private sector leaders, community institutions, and individual Americans to renew their commitment to the fundamental values of human dignity, character, and citizenship, and to demonstrate that commitment through individual actions and national priorities....We recommend that communities create opportunities for voluntary service by children and adults...."

— National Commission on Children, *Beyond Rhetoric: A New American Agenda for Children and Families* (1991).

"Time and again students complained that they felt isolated, unconnected to the larger world. We were struck during our study by the fact that teenagers can go through twelve years of formal education without becoming socially engaged, without spending time with older people who may be lonely, helping a child who has not learned to read, cleaning up litter on the street, or even rendering some useful service in the school itself. And this detachment occurs at the very time students are deciding who they are and where they fit."

— Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Student Service—The New Carnegie Unit* (1987).

by their employees, and took initiatives to reduce barriers to service—in particular, liability risks. This last effort led to the creation of the nonprofit National Center for Community Risk Management and Insurance.

In 1989, a flurry of youth service bills were introduced in Congress. They supported federal involvement in community service for a variety of reasons: strengthening the ethic of citizenship and civic responsibility; reinforcing the understanding that a citizen's rights and benefits—such as financial aid for education and training—are linked with a citizen's responsibilities to the country; providing occupational opportunities and developing job-relevant skills, especially for at-risk youth; and contributing to productive educational reform. In 1990, under the leadership of Senator Edward Kennedy, Chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, Senators Barbara Mikulski, Sam Nunn, Claiborne Pell, Christopher Dodd and Orrin Hatch joined to draft a new legislative initiative that ultimately evolved into the National and Community Service Act of 1990, ("The Act,") containing four main grant programs:

1. ***Serve-America,*** aimed at encouraging the development of programs, in schools and in community organizations, that enable school-age young people to learn through doing community service, through what it called "service learning" (see box).
2. ***Higher Education Innovative Projects,*** to encourage students to participate in community service as a part of their post-secondary experience .

Service Learning

The Act gives great emphasis to a method of education and youth development called service learning:

"A. Under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;

"B. That is integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what the student did and saw during the actual service activity;

"C. That provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities; and

"D. That enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others."

3. ***American Conservation and Youth Service Corps,*** to contribute to the creation or expansion of full-time, part-time and summer youth corps programs, which are especially important in offering opportunity to out-of-school youth.
4. ***National and Community Service Models,*** to support full-time and part-time programs that can serve as "effective model(s) for a large-scale national service program."

The Act was designed to enhance, but not direct, the infrastructure of service programs operating around the country. In the same spirit, it required that in most cases grants be made, through the states, rather than to local programs directly. The Act mandated careful evaluation of programs receiving grants, assistance to not more than four regional service clearinghouses, and taking other steps necessary to strengthen service in America.

The Act established an autonomous Commission, directed by a 21-member, bipartisan board, to direct implementation. President Bush nominated and the Senate confirmed the members of the board during the summer and early fall of 1991. The Commission Board members were sworn in and held their first meeting on September 25, 1991.

Early Work of the Commission

The timeline in Chart 2.1 (see p. 18) notes some of the Commission's main activities during its first year. Early on, the board and staff took stock of the state of service in the country and adopted a strategic vision, keyed to the stated purposes of the Act. This strategic vision (see box) expresses the board's perspective on how best to discharge the responsibilities that the Act assigns.

The Act requires most Commission grants to be made through the states. (In this report, we will often refer to local programs as "Commission grantees," even though technically speaking, they are actually "subgrantees" of states that have received Commission grants.) Recognizing that few states had extensive involvement in this field, the Commission encouraged a comprehensive planning process, involving young people and others active in service, as a basis for their grant applications. It also defined four key criteria for reviewing applications: *quality, innovation, replicability,* and *sustainability.* These criteria, applied along with the explicit requirements set out in each section of the Act, was intended to ensure that the Commission use its limited funds to support truly worthy models. Beyond these criteria, the Commission left a wide scope for applicants to put forward proposals tailored to their communities' needs and experience.

The Commission's Strategic Vision

Vision	Strategy
"The Commission...seeks to promote the development of a major national community service movement...[to] integrate community service into the fabric of American life."	In our view it is this movement, already underway when the Commission was established, that can fulfill the purposes stated in the Act. Like all movements, there are many sources of initiative; the Commission seeks to encourage and collaborate with them all.
"[The movement is] focused initially on youth but welcom[es] all."	All citizens, regardless of age, can make major contributions. However, after lengthy debate, the board agreed that the Commission would focus principal attention on youth during its first few years. Our resources are limited, most parts of the Act emphasize the involvement of young people, and some of the nation's most salient problems - and opportunities - concern youth; moreover, the Points of Light Foundation and ACTION are working to engage people across the age spectrum. Nevertheless, we intend to give considerable emphasis to cross-generational programs that engage adults in service with and for youth.
"[T]his effort...[should] involv[e] thousands of institutions both public and private [and] can engage millions of Americans in dealing with critical social problems."	When it has fulfilled its purpose, this movement will be successful not because it has spawned a wide range of service programs - although it will do that - but rather because community service will have become an important activity of most institutions—from churches to community agencies, from schools to government departments, from businesses to voluntary associations—and an important and continuing part of every citizen's way of life. Furthermore, when this has come about, people and institutions will be addressing critical problems that some of us now feel isolated from and many of us feel impotent to attack.
"[T]he Commission will carry out three principal strategies: (1) models....(2) people and infrastructure....(3) leadership."	The Act charges the Commission principally with responsibility for encouraging promising models. But in order to fulfill its purposes, we must also help develop the leaders who will carry the movement forward, and build the organizations and systems needed to sustain a strong community service sector in our society. And we must collaborate with others, in and out of government, to provide the visionary, coalition-building leadership that will be needed to deeply weave community service into American life.
"These strategies will be applied through programs focused on school-age children and their families...."	Although we speak frequently of "youth" and "young people," we recognize that the family plays a central role in young people's development of values and sense of community, and so whenever possible, we will encourage programs that involve families along with their children.

When the deadline date for grant applications of March 23, 1992 arrived, the response was impressive. The Commission received 504 applications from 388 applicants for a total of $226 million—more than three times the $67.5 million available under the four main programs. All but two states applied under at least one of the four programs, and the District

Chart 2.1

Timeline for Commission Start-up

October 16, 1990	National and Community Service Act of 1990 passes both the House and Senate
November 16, 1990	Bill signed by President Bush
March 12, 1991	National and Community Service Technical Amendment Act of 1991 passed
July thru September 1991	Commission members nominated by President Bush and confirmed by the Senate
September 25, 1991	Members sworn in at the White House
October 1991	Executive Director selected
October 20, 1991	First public board meeting held
January 1992	Technical assistance meetings held for applicants
February 13, 1992	Final regulations and applications adopted
March 23, 1992	Applications received in four general areas: K-12, higher education, youth corps, and national service models
June 8, 1992	Announced selection of first grantees
October 1992	Selection of evaluation contractor
October 5, 1992	National and Community Service Technical Amendment Act of 1992 passed
November 4, 1992	Meeting held with all grantees

of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Mariana Islands applied, as well as 38 Indian tribes.

During the next two months the Commission managed an extensive review process involving staff, more than 100 knowledgeable review panelists, and board committees, made its initial grant decisions, and began releasing funds to grantees—in time to fund summer programs during 1992 and to plan for school community service programs beginning in the fall of 1992. Chart 2.2 summarizes the number and dollar amounts of applications received and the grants made.

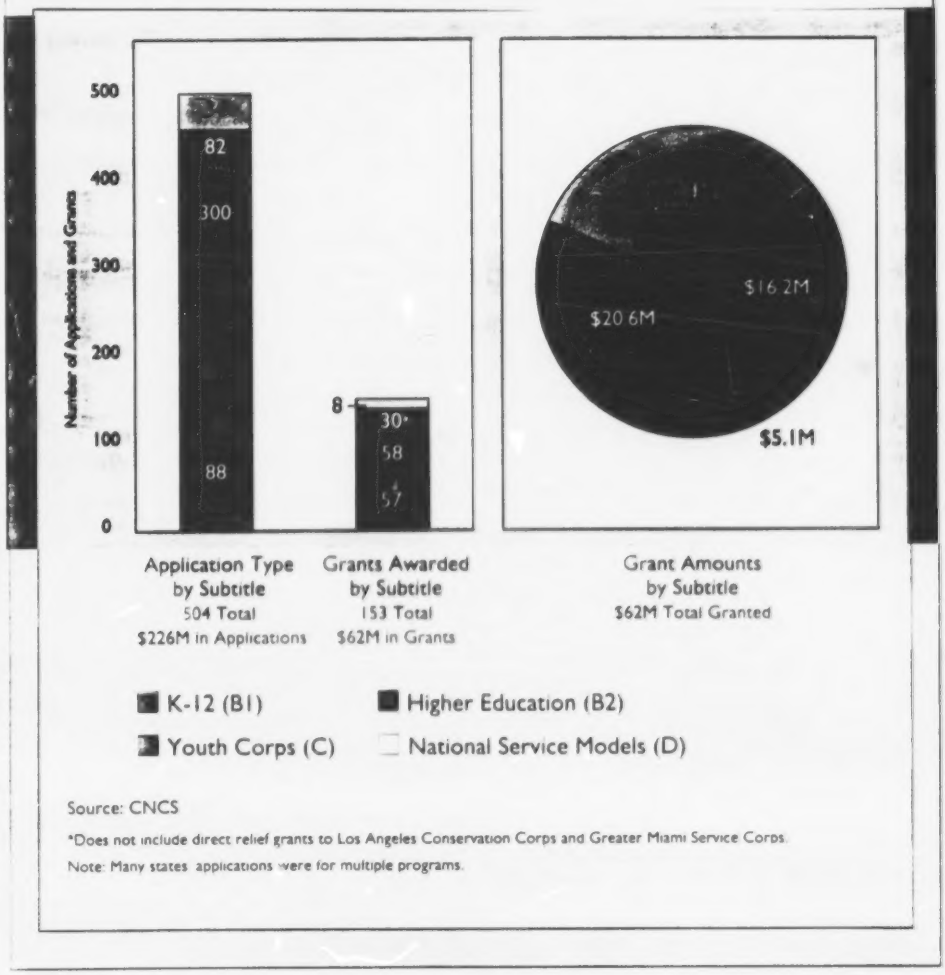
Once the grant process was complete, the Commission began pursuing several lines of initiative in parallel:

- *Movement-building:* The Commission began building working partnerships with the new grantees and establishing relationships with other organizations involved in community service, youth development, and educational reform. And in December, 1992, it held a series of hearings around the country to gather the best thinking of young people and others on emerging issues in the national service debate.

Chart 2.2

Applicants and Grants by Subtitle, FY92

Subtitles B1, B2, C, and D



Source: CNCS

*Does not include direct relief grants to Los Angeles Conservation Corps and Greater Miami Service Corps.

Note: Many states' applications were for multiple programs.

- ***Shared learning:*** The Commission initiated a process of establishing a regional clearinghouse to concentrate on K-12 and adopted a plan to provide a series of regional workshops on service learning; to hold interactive workshops among grantees and others on other important topics—e.g., teacher training, and youth leadership development; to put together technical assistance teams; and to fund several Commission Senior Fellows to provide leadership and technical assistance around the country. It is providing grants to the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps to develop "circuit riders" and "new corps mentors" to strengthen youth corps, and to Campus Opportunity Outreach League to employ "road scholars" to perform similar roles with student service programs.
- ***Innovative projects:*** The Commission authorized up to $200,000 in grants in each of five areas to test the ideas set out in the Act's Subtitle E (Innovative and Demonstration Programs and Projects). Two programs agreed on are:
  - *Foster Grandparents:* ACTION will place Foster Grandparents in Head Start Parent Child Centers to provide support services including reading readiness, communication skills, eye-hand coordination, and language stimulation for children, and parenting and nurturing skills for adults.
  - *Peace Corps:* will extend its preparatory program, through which students are recruited as early as their junior year, to ten historically-black and Hispanic–American colleges and universities.

  The Commission has received applications for the remaining three programs and expects to make grants in early 1993. These programs are:
  - Governors Innovative Service Programs
  - Rural Youth Service Demonstration Project
  - Employer-Based Retiree Volunteer Programs
- ***Presidential Awards:*** The Commission worked with the White House Office of National Service, the Points of Light Foundation, and the American Institute for Public Service to define the Presidential Youth Service Awards authorized by the Act. On October 28, 1992 President Bush signed an Executive Order creating these awards. Using the President's Physical Fitness Awards as a model, this program will recognize thousands of young people and other youth service leaders.
- ***Presidential Executive Order to agency heads:*** The Commission assisted the Office of National Service in preparing an Executive Order (available from the commission), pursuant to Section 182 of the Act, ordering Cabinet members and other agency heads to encourage their

employees to volunteer for "direct and consequential community service," and to designate an Office of Community Service. The Commission has also provided encouragement to volunteer programs for federal employees, in particular in the Agriculture Department and at military bases.

- ***Youth involvement:*** The Commission has recommended to President-elect Clinton that two of the existing five vacancies on the board be filled by young people. In addition to hiring a staff composed predominantly of young people early in their careers, the Commission created a "youth voice" committee of its board, appointed a "youth voice" staff member, and actively engaged youth service leaders in ongoing policy discussions.
- ***Evaluation:*** The Act gives considerable emphasis to evaluation, and the Commission is convinced that evaluation results will be critical to shaping the desired future growth of community service. We have contracted with Abt Associates Inc., an evaluation contractor, to develop and carry out a comprehensive evaluation plan. The evaluator will work with grantees in establishing an evaluation information system designed to provide accurate, comprehensive information about participants and program activities in all program areas. It will carry out studies and analysis of the impacts of selected grantees programs on the communities served and on the participants, and of the cost-effectiveness of these programs. The evaluator will also study how program impacts vary with program characteristics.

During the 1930s, only one of three million Civilian Conservation Corps members was a woman, but today women comprise close to 40 percent of youth corps membership.

Although the Commission has begun all statutorily required action, there is a good deal left to accomplish with respect to regional clearinghouses, Innovative and Demonstration Programs and Projects, and training to be provided for all participants in the national service models. In addition, we have yet to take the first steps in building working relationships with leaders in the religious community concerned with voluntary service, and with inner-city groups.

> The ultimate goal...is to have service become a natural and understood part of growing up in America, a part of the fabric of all of the communities' basic institutions, so that wherever I go, whether it's a library or a boys and girls club, I run into it.
>
> Jack Calhoun
> Executive Director
> National Crime Prevention Council, at Commission hearings, Los Angeles

Elements of Successful Service

The Commission's early experience—through its granting process, hearings around the country, dialogue with local and national service leaders, and the information it has collected from on-site reporting—has produced a preliminary understanding of some key elements of successful service programs, elements that can be used to guide the service movement as it continues to grow:

- ***Youth leadership.*** Young people contribute more and grow more when they have leadership roles in all aspects of program planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- ***Diversity of participants and team spirit.*** Service that provides a common ground for different types of people to learn, contribute, and grow together is a valuable vehicle for overcoming social barriers.
- ***Worthwhile work.*** Those in service want to do work that matters. Whether they are building a house or tutoring children, servers must understand why what they are doing is important.
- ***Diversity of opportunities.*** In choosing among projects, and in assigning tasks within projects, programs need to recognize that people have different interests and talents, needs and desires.
- ***Education and reflection.*** Programs are most effective when participants reflect on their service experiences in structured ways—such as reading and group discussion—that help them think critically about what they are doing and learning.
- ***Training.*** Those in service need to be properly prepared for the work they are to do. Moreover, development of new knowledge and skills is one of the rewards of serving.
- ***Evaluation.*** Good programs build in mechanisms for evaluation, and learn from them how to improve their future work.

Future Challenges

As we reflect on our first year, we have seen many examples of community service in the country that are impressive. Even so, we are acutely aware that there is much more that has to be done:

- Many service activities have been established within the past few years, and most are small relative to the needs of their communities and relative to the number of young people available for participation.
- For most programs, funding is tenuous; sometimes, institutional support is as well—e.g., school support for teachers who are introducing service learning, and campus support for college students who are initiating community service projects.

- Relatively few research and evaluation studies have been done, and—although their results are generally encouraging—they are by no means definitive.
- The complex network of intermediate organizations that characterizes mature sectors of society—for training, for research and evaluation, for knowledge transfer, for career development and referral, etc.—is, in the field of service, at a rather early stage of development.

We appreciate that our own role is limited, not only because our financial contribution is a relatively small share of the total being spent on community service at present, but also as a federal agency, we have not yet identified the cost effectiveness of the programs established by the Act. However, if these programs do prove cost-effective, it will demonstrate that the federal government can make a difference.

The Formative Years: Service Learning Among School-age Youth

Chapter 3

Students at risk of dropping out have fun during the school day in nursing homes leading dance and exercise classes for lonely seniors

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What You Can Do For Your Country

Young people can make a difference in their local communities, and service in the local community can make a difference in our youth. It can channel their energy in productive and educational ways that lead to self-esteem, learning, cooperation, and citizenship. It can also implant an ethic of service in a young person that can pay life-long dividends to society. With such gains possible, trying to make quality service learning opportunities available to America's children early in their lives — in school, after school, and during the summer—would seem to make sense.

A growing number of experts who have studied America's youth problems agree. One recent report has stated, "Youth service in the community should be part of the core program in middle school education."[1] Another proposes, "Service should be an integral part of the regular school curricula..."[2]

> We have one boy here who has attention deficit disorder, and the only half-hour all day he settles down is when he's tutoring.
>
> Linda Jenkins
> Elementary school principal, Mount Vernon, Washington

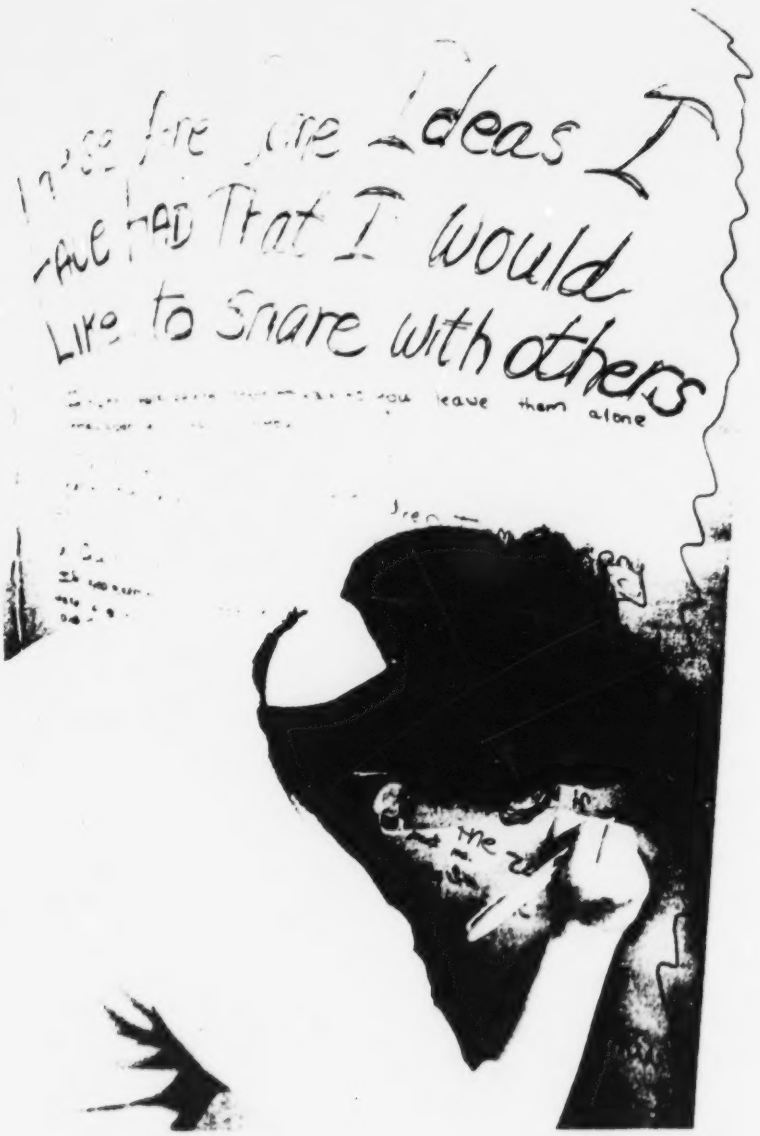
But even so, parents, principals, and teachers alike are inclined to worry that the school day is already too cluttered with requirements. No matter how worthwhile it might be to encourage civic values, they will wonder: Isn't that just subtracting more time from a school year that's already too short?

There are two things to say in response.

First, there is indeed a risk that if service learning is implemented as an addition to the traditional course offerings instead of as a vehicle to improve the quality of teaching and learning within the regular curriculum, it may put stress on a school day that is already crowded. Those wishing to implement service learning in the schools must be constantly mindful of such risks and constraints.

Second, consider the Washington Elementary School in Mount Vernon, Washington.

With its carved Halloween pumpkins on the front steps, and stars and stripes fluttering in the breeze, Washington Elementary looks like a Norman Rockwell painting, but it has all the searing modern school problems that the *Saturday Evening Post* never dreamt of: poor children, abused children, emotionally and intellectually disadvantaged children, children for whom English is a puzzling second language. One-third of its students have been identified as "at-risk," one-half are poor enough to qualify for a



Getting students to reflect and think hard about their service experiences is a key factor in successful programs.

free lunch. One-third are children of migrant workers. Yet, this rural elementary school is coping because it has discovered the powers of student service.

Some second graders started the school compost bin last year as part of their science class. Reflecting on what they had learned, they put together a do-it-yourself book explaining composting for classmates and parents, and this year they will help with the school's landscaping.

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All 4th graders have paired off with individual younger students whom they tutor in reading. Some of the tutees have made progress that had eluded them with adult teachers, and some of the most difficult youngsters have excelled as tutors. "We have one boy here," reports Linda Jenkins, who provided the original impetus for the school's service orientation when she became its principal six years ago, "who has attention deficit disorder, and the only half-hour all day he settles down is when he's tutoring." At the school's recent "heroes" ice cream social, where students invited those they looked up to, there was the usual collection of grandfathers, older siblings, coaches, etc.—and one 4th-grader, honored by his reading tutee.

Peer tutoring is a regular part of the schedule in every classroom. That's a life-saver for children like Blanca, who came to the school so profoundly language-deficient that it was suspected she was autistic. In fact, the problem was simply that Blanca was born into a large, busy, and non-English-speaking family of migrant workers; nobody in her world ever read to her or spoke to her all by herself. Nobody, that is, until her classmate did for forty minutes a day.

Peer tutoring is a life-saver for children like Blanca, who came to school so profoundly language-deficient that it was suspected she was autistic. Nobody in her world ever read to her or spoke to her all by herself. Nobody, that is, until her classmate did for forty minutes a day.

This year the school district has hired a part-time assistant to coordinate all the parent and community volunteers at Washington Elementary. They include students from the nearby community college who serve as unpaid teaching assistants, high school students who come once a week to teach Spanish to the 2nd and 3rd graders, and parents who help out with office work.

In every classroom, there is a service project associated with each academic unit. And out on the playground, the peace is kept by student "conflict managers"—students who've been elected by their peers as the best people to see if there's a problem.

Has all this service work interfered with the school's academic performance? Hardly. Before Ms. Jenkins arrived, the school had the lowest academic performance rates in the district. Now the students are at the same reading level as their rival elementary school, even though 30% of Washington Elementary's students read English as a second language versus 10% at the district's other schools. Research done over the last several years shows that students at Washington have consistently scored higher in math than students at the study's control school.

Results like that don't happen by magic. There's a logic to them—you never learn anything as well as when you have to teach it or do it, and there are some things children teach and do as well as or better than adults. Putting that logic to work is what service learning is all about.

A.R.K. or Animals Rehabilitating Kids, began in 1974 when a student in Scottsburg, Indiana brought an injured owl into his science teacher for help. Today, seventh and eighth graders at the William H. English Middle School operate what has grown into the largest wild animal rehabilitation facility in the state of Indiana. This happened even though Scott county, where the school is located, is ranked the lowest in Indiana in educational attainment, and has the highest rate of unemployment and food stamp allocations in the state. Ninety-five percent of the program's $10,000 budget is financed by recycling.

"That day in 1974 began our 'evolution' from reading *about* science to a way of *doing* science," reminisces the teacher, Sam Chattin, "A way of doing science that has forever banished the 'I-will-tell-you-and-you-WILL-learn' science with which I was bludgeoning [the students] semi-comatose. A way of doing science that helped me and the kids to discover that we didn't have to battle each other over something called education—we could be colleagues."

At English Middle School the entire science curriculum is united by the theme of caring for and treating sick and injured animals. "Service," says Mr. Chattin, "is the total curriculum." The National Science Teachers Association recently ranked this program among the top ten in the country, determining that English Middle School students placed in the 97th percentile in science knowledge, the 95th percentile in ability to apply scientific knowledge, and were the first group ever to place in the 100th percentile in their attitudes about science. Every single student tested chose science as his or her favorite subject.

Such examples and a growing body of research offer intriguing hints of the power service has to propel schools towards excellence in learning and youth development. There are at least four ways in which service learning can be important to school-age children: it can raise a child's sense of confidence; it can encourage youngsters to take a more active role in things—including in their own education; it can enable them to build trusting and caring relationships—with peers, younger and older children, and with adults; and it can enable the young to feel they can make a difference in the lives of others.

Research and evaluation on learning through service consistently tends to show positive results for both server and served in terms of academic improvement and personal growth. The most powerful finding in this field, from the 1960s onward, is that tutoring programs produce significant benefits for both the child tutored and the child tutoring. One team of researchers found that in 32 out of 39 studies of tutoring programs, students who served as tutors performed better on exams related to the tutoring sub-

There are many educators, myself among them, who believe that community service learning is a way to reform schools and to bring about needed changes in education, but we need the help of our President, the help of the U.S. Office of Education, all of our states and governors, and our chief state school officers to publicly support the efforts of community service learning.

▼

Lotta Waters
Ohio teacher,
at Commission hearings,
Washington, D.C.

ject than did a control group of students.[3] Other researchers have found that peer tutoring is more effective for student achievement, and more cost-efficient, than reduced class size or computer-assisted instruction.[4] And the demand is there: In 1990 close to 50% of high school dropouts said they would return to school if they were sure they would get tutored.[5]

Youth service programs are increasingly seen by researchers as an important vehicle for reducing the alienation many young people feel from their families, schools and communities, a disconnectedness that often manifests itself in the social problems of alcohol and drug abuse,

Service projects often enable young adults to discover that they have a surprising empathy for children of all kinds.

teen pregnancy, and dropping out of school. Conrad and Hedin found in their comprehensive study of experiential programs that such intellectual and social gains as improved problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and increased self-confidence, especially in interacting with adults, were much more commonly found in students involved in community service than those in an uninvolved control group.[6]

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Service learning may also answer the calls of leading educational reformers for more personalized teaching and learning strategies, for seeing teachers as coaches of students who teach themselves and each other, and for recognizing the school as the center of a community.

The challenge is to try to enable all children to have the opportunity to learn through service. Today, far too many children don't.

Current Situation

In the late 1960's and throughout the 1970's, many leading advocates for children and several national commissions began to propose that greater opportunities be made available for young people to do community service. Judge Mary Conway Kohler led the way through the National Commission on Resources for Youth in developing "youth participation" programs that brought adolescents together with adults in community projects such as oral histories and daycare helper programs.

While the immense potential for youth service has barely been realized, and statistics of youth voluntarism are scarce, according to one leading survey, the numbers of youths volunteering is rising. As we noted in Chapter 2, the Independent Sector reports that 61% of 12-17 year-olds volunteered an average of 3.2 hours per week in 1991, up from 58% of 14-17 year-olds in 1989. Teenage volunteers gave an estimated 2.1 billion hours of service in 1991.

Well-known youth organizations such as the Girl Scouts and 4-H have historically used non-classroom service projects to tap into the potential of youngsters during their most formative years. For example, last March, Girl Scouts U.S.A. launched a new initiative in Washington, D.C., called "Girl Scouts Care for the Earth," in which 330 local Girl Scout Councils decide how to promote environmental stewardship. Some of the Girl Scout troops in the San Francisco Bay Area have planted trees and have worked with local organizations, such as the Pinole Homeowners Association, to distribute leaflets about water conservation.

Many other community organizations that have long worked with youth have also begun in the last decade to likewise recognize young people as not only needing services but also as being able to provide services to others.

For example, Big Brothers /Big Sisters has launched two new initiatives that reflect this change from young people being primarily recipients of mentoring and tutoring to them being excellent providers of these services. One involves mentoring pairs doing community service projects together and the other recruits high school students to be Big Siblings for younger children. According to the organization's director, Dagmar McGill, this marks a 'paradigm shift' in the way youth serving groups are viewing youth.

And even among schools, Washington Elementary and English Middle School are by no means alone. There's the new Community Service Academy at a public middle school in Harlem, and Chesnut Ridge High School in rural Pennsylvania, and many others that have found ways to involve their students in needed community problem-solving and to enhance their education in the process.

At 974 Prospect Avenue in the South Bronx stands the Dormitory Project, one of the most creative responses to a serious social problem made by any school in America. Any morning at the start of the school day you can look down a hallway at Bronx Regional High School and see an unmistakable sign of the student body's extreme degree of poverty. It's those students carrying the big plastic bags full of stuff. These students aren't just carrying books and pencils—they're carrying all their earthly possessions. They're homeless. Because of parents who spend all the rent money on crack or commit physical or sexual assaults, and because of similar abuses at foster and group homes, for several years now, scores of students attending BRHS have been left homeless.

Until staff members of BRHS got together with some of the folks at the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association (a neighborhood development corporation, so-called because it's located on a curved portion of Kelly St.), the Dormitory was just another of the neighborhood's many abandoned buildings. But now it's being turned into something else—a refuge for 20 homeless students, that will soon be ready for occupancy. And this ambitious construction project wasn't just farmed out to a contractor. No—almost all the labor on the project was supplied by BRHS students. With their own sweat, these youths are taking a personal bite out of the Bronx's homelessness problem. They are building a house for their classmates.

The students working on the project get to do so for a single semester; out of that, they spend three months in school taking classes, including a life-skills class covering work-related topics, and then three months at the work site. Every day, rain or shine, thirty-some boys and girls make the trek from the school up Prospect, proudly wearing their hard-hats and toolbelts, for another full day of drilling, hammering, plastering, and the unbelievable thrill of walking on a high beam. They are paid minimum wage for their actual work time as well as a dollar for each class they attend during the academic portion. The pay is considered so good and the training in basic construction skills such a life boost that some ex-students have "dropped-in" in order to participate.

As many of the examples suggest, often service learning innovations in schools are piecemeal. They are in only one subject area or one classroom, often the product of an energetic teacher or two, or they are targeted only at a special subset of children. A 1987 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching survey found that while 70% of the 1,100 responding schools reported they offered some form of student service program, only 20% of students in those schools actually participated in them.[7] Individual efforts are in constant danger of dying out when a teacher is transferred or simply moves on to something else. Even if that doesn't happen, when the leadership team in a school does not see these small efforts as early steps towards positive change for the whole school, the result is distracting conflicts over time and resources between teachers who do service learning and those who don't. And the effects of one class or one grade taught in the service spirit can wear off if they are not followed by a similar approach in the next class or the next grade. In these fragmented circumstances, community service is most likely to strike parents, teachers, and students alike as a diversion from educational goals. This makes service programs especially vulnerable in budget crunches.

One way that advocates of service learning have addressed these potential problems is through developing service-based summer programs. These might include service corps-type programs for school-age youths, or educational enrichment programs mixed with service learning during the summer months. This is the time when many children have nothing to do and could provide a valuable resource to their community. This is also a time when teachers are less pressured than they are during the hectic school-year, and often more able to experiment with new curriculum and teaching methods.

One such summer program is WalkAbout, created by a partnership formed among the Minneapolis public schools, Minneapolis city officials, and the National Youth Leadership Council. The program's "learning teams," comprising one school teacher, two college students, four high school students, and 28 elementary school students, engage in a variety of educational and service learning activities. For instance, some WalkAbout K-3rd graders learn about timelines through visits to senior citizens centers, and they learn about relationships between different plant groups and pick up some graphing skills when they go to the community gardens and measure the root systems of the weeds there.[8]

WalkAbout's unorthodox style of team learning is aimed at encouraging everyone involved—from the teacher to the kindergartner—to appreciate what they have to offer others as well as what they have to learn from them. The children gain six weeks of educational enrichment and fun ser-

"Service learning authentically engages students in addressing unmet needs in their school and larger community, and advances learning and performance outcomes in specific subject areas, particularly, but not exclusively, citizenship."

A subcommittee of the National Education Goals Panel

vice learning activities; the high school and college students learn about teaching, service learning, and working on a team; and the school teacher is able to collaborate with other teachers in curriculum development and to exchange lessons learned that can be put to use during the regular school year.

If summer school is one opportunity children have to do something educational and useful outside the regular academic calendar, summer camp is another. The Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC) provides an alternative to the typical recreational daycamps. A national network of 12 locally-operated programs that began in 1987, the YVC has involved over 1,000 11-18-year-olds in full-time summer community service. Each program works through a community-based organization such as the United Way or the local YMCA, and coordinates 6-10 teams of youths from diverse backgrounds working on different community projects. Last summer in Detroit, one team, made up of suburbanites and inner city youths and led by a local college student, wrote and produced a traveling show about AIDS, discrimination, and peer pressure, which they performed 15 times for over 300 children around the city. In Colorado Springs, another team worked through the local Red Cross in a project teaching young people with disabilities how to ride horses.

When Sohi Oh, a high school senior, began volunteering last year at a home for young people with severe mental and physical disabilities, she was scared. "My parents taught me not to stare at people with disabilities. I was supposed to look away." But now she is planning to continue this work as a career, and is going to major in special education.

Schools and youth-serving organizations have another important resource that they can use in implementing service learning: adult volunteers and college student volunteers. For years adults have been tutoring and mentoring young people through corporate and local volunteer programs. One innovative example of adult volunteers at work is that of the Kelly Air Force Base/Southwest ISD Mentoring Partnership, in San Antonio, Texas. Started in 1989 (under the leadership of Maria Ferrier, now on the Commission board), this mentoring program pairs up over 1,000 air force personnel—including the base commander, fighter pilots, maintenance workers, and office secretaries—with local school children for weekly activities.

Service learning resources centers such as The National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence in New York, and the Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles, have been steadily growing in many regions of the country over the past decade. Several major foundations and some smaller, local ones, have taken up the cause of service learning, especially through supporting such essentials as teacher training and program replication.

For example, the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) in Minnesota has, through its Service Learning Teacher Institute, trained over 10,000 educators—and is expecting to train another 10,000 over the next

four years—to integrate service learning into all subject areas and grade levels. Its published curriculum guides and program materials are widely used by schools and community-based organizations around the country. Largely as a result of the tireless work of the NYLC, over 100,000 of Minnesota's 750,000 students are involved in service learning.

With financial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the NYLC has begun an ambitious project to form a network of 33 cutting-edge schools in four regions of the country. One of the schools is Washington Elementary. Each school in the network has committed to developing deeply-rooted service learning practices and to helping other schools in their districts initiate them. In addition to gaining support and technical assistance from the NYLC, these "generator schools" are connected to one another through regional resource centers, such as the National Indian Youth Leadership Project in New Mexico and Project Service Leadership in Mt. Vernon, Washington.

The Generator Schools Project has at least three key elements:

1. Commitment by the principal and leadership team of each school to make learning through service a core practice of their whole school.

2. Ready support for these innovative teams from talented champions of service learning operating out of nearby resource centers.

3. Active initiatives—by NYLC, the regional resource centers, and each participating school—to attract other school leaders to visit and learn.

Best of all: it is cost-efficient. Each school that is chosen to be a part of the project receives, over three years, $11,000 from DeWitt-Wallace, and the school has to pitch in $5,500. The resource centers get $15,000 over two years from Kellogg to work with the generator schools in their respective regions.

Issues

Many issues have been raised recently that are worth considering as we think about the future of service by school-age youth:

1. ***Should service learning be pursued primarily in civic education courses and projects or more broadly across the curriculum?*** Certainly service learning has immense value for the teaching of civic education, because it encourages young people to be active participants in the community, with opinions and abilities worth sharing. But as many of the foregoing examples show, service learning can transform the learning experience in *any* subject area, immersing children in their education in ways

that traditional approaches often cannot. That is, the evidence that we are aware of thus far indicates that while service learning certainly should be a part of the teaching of civics, it should not be limited to that.

2. ***Should service be mandatory or voluntary?*** Many private schools have had community service as a graduation requirement for years, and now in some public schools a certain number of volunteer hours or a service project is required for graduation. The city of Atlanta, the District of Columbia, and the state of Maryland all have high school community service requirements. It is too early to tell whether these requirements are beneficial to either the high schooler or the community. However, if service were increasingly integrated into the normal process of teaching, it would become less prone to this controversy.

3. ***Is service learning something that can only happen in schools?*** No. Service learning, as defined in the Act and stated in Chapter 2, comes from having structured time to reflect on—think about, talk about, and write about—the experiences one has while doing service, and community-based organizations other than schools certainly are capable of providing such structured time. Moreover, because not all children are actually in school, and because even those that are spend only a small fraction of their lives in class, the contribution of non-school-based service learning opportunities is needed if we truly want to build service into the fabric of American life. However, for service to become central to the way that we educate our children it also has to be much more fully integrated into the primary public institution charged with this function: the schools.

4. ***Should service learning be targeted at certain sectors of the school-age youth population?*** Many of the programs operating in schools and communities today are targeted at certain groups of young people—for instance, often it's the students already showing leadership who are chosen to be tutors, or it's the at-risk students who are offered the opportunity to volunteer at a daycare or old age home. A case could also be made, and the Carnegie Council made it in their *Turning Points* report, that the multiplier effects of investing in the middle school years are greater than investments in other years. Indeed, that report recommended that service learning be a part of the core curricula of all middle schools.

But as the examples in this chapter show, service can be a powerful learning experience for any kind of child: in school or not, motivated or shy, excelling in school or failing, elementary age or teenage, living in the inner city or in a rural town. The Commission would like to see all young people have the opportunity to learn through service, and hopes that by encouraging a wide range of experiments and models in this field, this possibility is enhanced.

5. ***Is service learning expensive?*** As Washington Elementary illustrates, a lot can be done with a relatively small incremental sum. The peer tutoring program at Washington, the original service learning project the school started five years ago, initially cost the district a couple days' worth of salary for the substitute teachers to take over while the regular teachers did initial training, and now it runs about $200 a year for materials. The conflict managers program also required only a few days of substitutes while regular teachers went to training sessions, and since then the only expense has been the managers' distinctive hats and jackets. Now, with its three-year generator school grant totalling all of $11,000, the school can invest in more staff development and materials for curricular service learning projects, such as the wood to make the compost bins, and bird feeders for the bird sanctuary, a project of the 5th grade science class.

Research shows that peer tutoring may be more effective for student achievement, and more cost-efficient, than reduced class size or computer-assisted instruction.

Of course, some schools might have to invest more than others in identifying the best community service opportunities, helping community agencies learn how best to utilize young people, and training teachers to maximize the learning from each service experience. One effective, but more costly, way of doing this seems to be through hiring a school- or district-based community service coordinator.

With summer service programs, a little also goes a long way. For example, the Youth Volunteer Corps calculates that a summer program and year-round follow-up cost $600 per student. It is up to the local YVC coordinators and their host agencies to come up with the funding, 80% of which is private. The budget for a Washington state summer program modeled on WalkAbout, called Best SELF, is $300,000—under $550 per student. Best SELF has been particularly resourceful in piecing together funds from a variety of sources, including the federal Job Training Partnership Act, college work-study, the County Department of Health and Human Services, the Parks Department (which actually operates the program), and local foundations.

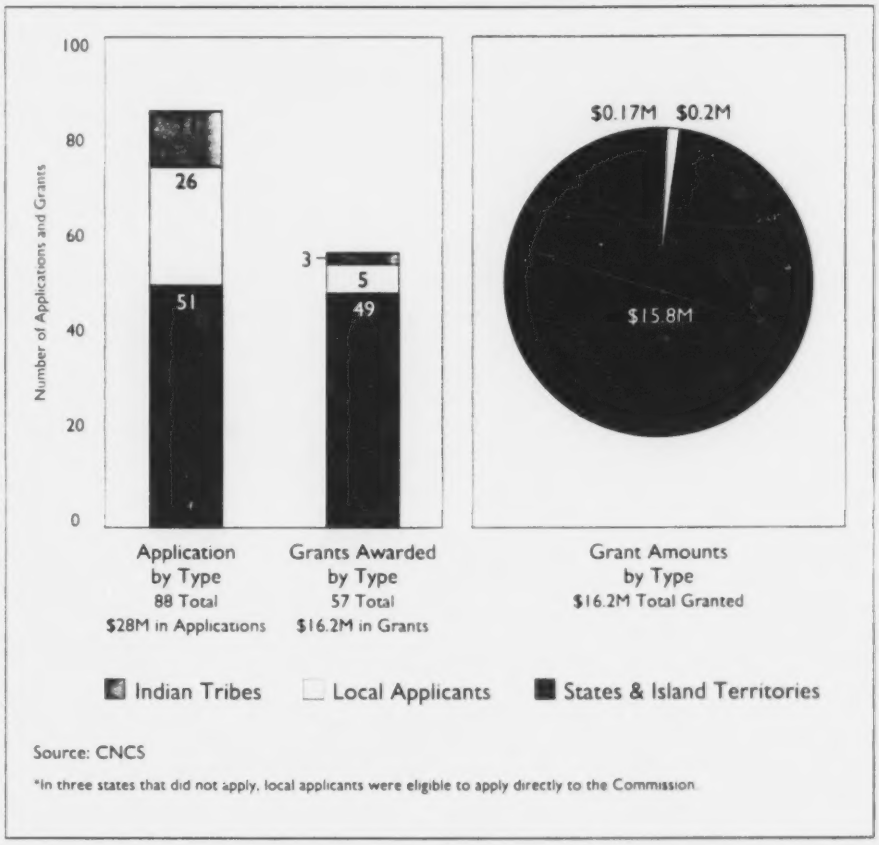
While service learning is not the only answer to the education crisis in this country, it seems to be a relatively low-cost investment.

The Commission's Role

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 authorized the Commission to provide grants to states to encourage the development of service learning in schools and youth-serving agencies. The grants were based on a statutory formula driven by the state's total school-age population and certain federal allocations to primary and secondary schools. In order to qualify for a grant, a state had to put forward a plan setting out how it would use the funds. For fiscal year 1992 Congress appropriated $22.5 million to K-12 and higher education combined, and the Commission agreed to commit 75% of that amount, or $16.9 million, to K-12. States must use 15% of their grant to fund community-based organizations, and up to 10% can be put toward partnerships with organizations using adult volunteers.

Chart 3.1

K-12 Applicants and Grantees by Type, FY92



Source: CNCS

*In three states that did not apply, local applicants were eligible to apply directly to the Commission.

Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia applied for grants, along with twenty-six local applicants in the states that declined to apply. Eleven Indian tribes and three U.S. Territories applied as well. Chart 3.1 summarizes the applications and grants made. Forty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico fully met the standards set out by the Board and thus, received full formula allotments called operating grants. Seven states did not fully meet the criteria set out in the application, and so received small-

er planning grants during fiscal year 1992 equal to 25% of what their formula alotment would have been. The Board decided to make the remaining 75% of that money available to eight "leader states" to build their capability to serve as models and sources of assistance. State agencies have just recently completed, or will complete shortly, the process of subgranting to local schools and community based organizations. Our evaluation contractor is devising a system that will provide accurate data on the number and type of subgrants made.

The eight leader states, selected mainly for the quality and innovation of their applications, took a variety of approaches to advancing service learning. For example:

- In Maryland, the first state in the country to make community service a high school graduation requirement, teenagers with mental retardation are running a center for needy families in one project. Other special education students are working in hospitals, soup kitchens, nursing homes, and day care centers. The state is also using its grant to disseminate "best practices" materials and to launch a fellows program for excellent teachers who travel to other states to provide technical assistance.
- Vermont is enhancing an already strong school community service system by focusing on three issues of concern: family literacy, the poverty cycle, and the environment. It is offering mini-grants to promote local student initiatives, and it is strengthening the partnership between the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) and schools and organizations doing intergenerational service projects. Vermont is also developing assessment tools and is providing technical assistance for replication by other states.
- Colorado is developing a regional center for service learning that will provide consultation and on-site assistance to other western states, and it is linking Commission-sponsored projects with the Carnegie Council's *Turning Points* initiative to improve the quality of the middle school learning experience. Colorado is also actively linking service learning to other major school-reform efforts in the state, especially the New Standards Project, part of Dr. Theodore Sizer's Coalition for Essential Schools.

Those receiving operating grants illustrate the range of approaches taken when states are building on a smaller base:

- A partnership between the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Business Forum, and Clark Atlanta University received a grant to replicate exemplary service learning programs in school and community organizations, to train leaders of these programs, and to train teachers in an effort to infuse service learning into the regular curriculum of the public schools.
- The Kansas Office for Community Service has made subgrants to six school districts and three community-based groups to implement community service programs. For example, El Centro, a well-established community center in Kansas City, Kansas, is expanding its youth academic enrichment programs to begin a program called "Students as Teachers" where 100 high school students will, on a one-to-one basis, tutor children from the local public schools. Several of the school districts receiving grants are recruiting thousands of students into service, with youths with disabilities making up close to ten percent of that total.

The Indian tribes and local organizations in Alaska and Connecticut that were awarded grants put forward programs that were small in scale, but innovative and deserving. For example:

- The Sitka School District in Alaska has begun an intergenerational partnership with seniors called SASSY, standing for Seniors and Sitka Sound Youth, which is creating a variety of projects to enhance the lives of both groups, ranging from writing "memory books" and recording oral histories, to studying Alaskan history together.
- Community Mediation, Inc., in New Haven, Connecticut, is recruiting black and Hispanic teens to become youth conflict mediators through the police department in the city's West Rock neighborhood.

Soon after it made its grants the Commission held a working session with representatives of the eight leader states in order to enlist them fully in the effort to help nearby states—especially those that received only planning grants the first year—and to begin building the kind of working partnership that we want in the community service field. More recently we have met with representatives of almost all of the grantees in order to discuss evaluation strategies and the Commission's technical assistance plans for the coming year.

The Act requires that the Commission fund up to four regional clearinghouses. The K-12 field needs to communicate best practices as rapidly as experience is gained, to provide training for teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members, and to assist schools and districts seeking to make major use of service learning approaches. Therefore, we have decided to focus our resources initially on developing a clearinghouse aimed at service by school-age youth. The staff is currently receiving applications from institutions qualified to operate a clearinghouse, and we anticipate making a grant in this area from the Commission's discretionary funds in the spring of 1993. As is discussed in the following chapter, we also intend to encourage institutions of higher education to provide much greater support for service learning in elementary and secondary schools.

Many secondary schools are establishing programs that allow young people to do service in local day care centers.

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The Way Forward

All school-age children should have the kind of opportunities for learning and personal development that the students in Washington Elementary and English Middle School have, that the youngsters in WalkAbout and the Youth Volunteer Corps have. When this result is achieved, we can imagine that our children will grow up with new confidence, new capabilities, and new civic involvement.

To push toward fulfilling this vision, we put forth the following two goals:

1. ***Elementary, middle, and high schools in which service is a central practice across the curriculum should exist in every state and major metropolitan area.***

The more deeply rooted service learning is, the greater its benefits are, and in order for increasing numbers of schools to adopt similar approaches, they need nearby models to draw on and learn from. Washington Elementary, though, did not start out with everyone on board and all the students involved. It grew up over several years into what it is today, and it is still growing. Many small efforts around the country—a service leadership course at Gig Harbor High School outside of Tacoma, Washington or a social studies class involving service at Shoreham Wading River Middle School on Long Island—have blossomed into much larger endeavors, with the commitment of the principals, the creativity of a few teachers or service learning coordinators, and the energy of lots of students. The potential is there for many programs to grow and blossom.

2. ***All middle school students should have the opportunity to participate, ideally during the summer, in an intensive community service program, at least once before high school.***

Ultimately we hope such opportunities open for older and younger children as well, but the middle school years are crucial. Middle schoolers are concerned with the development of relationships with peers and older children, and they are developing their perspective on their role in the larger society. Moreover, in this era of single-parent and two-earner families, most have a substantial amount of free time, now frequently ill-used. With the high school years filled with scary pressures of drugs and alcohol use, sex, loneliness and alienation, violence, and fears of growing up, a summer of service could be a powerful way to bolster young people's confidence and sense of self before they get fully caught up in the whirlwind of adolescence. An intensive summer experience, if reinforced by subsequent opportunities during the year, can have a decisive impact on young lives.

What needs to be done to realize these goals?

Develop and support leaders and their schools. What's distinctive about the Washington Elementary Schools of this country is that in them, service is a habit applied to *everything.* Faced with the daunting academic problems of disadvantaged children, or with too large a playground to watch with the few teachers available, the school thinks first about *what the students can do.* We need models like this to show other schools the potential for service learning, and to be resources for how to translate the potential into reality. The Generator Schools Project discussed earlier may provide one cost-efficient way that the country could go about growing schools where service is a central pedagogy.

Fund service learning coordinators in schools ready to make good use of them. While the aforementioned first step is focused on pushing the leading edge of the development of this educational field, that effort will not reach the majority of schools. Therefore, a simultaneous strategy of planting seeds of service learning in thousands of schools needs to be pursued. What could make a real difference would be a person in a school or a designated school district, even part-time, who develops relationships with community organizations and designs service learning projects for school children. Some school systems have enlisted college students with experience in running service programs for these positions. As it gets established, the Pennsylvania National Service model (discussed in Chapter 6) will provide one example of how schools can utilize community service coordinators.

Students at the National Indian Youth Leadership Camp in New Mexico work hard in the hot sun during a summer service project for the National Park Service.

Train teachers. To make service learning truly a central part of the way we educate our children, current and future teachers need to have training in this teaching technique and philosophy of learning; they also need time and support to develop service learning lesson plans and test them out. The training that such organizations as the National Youth Leadership Council in Minnesota have been providing to educators for years is critical for building service learning into teaching practices. Unfortunately, very few teacher education programs at colleges and universities cover service

learning adequately. Through our higher education grant program, we are encouraging graduate schools of education to do so.

Build state or regional resource centers. Several organizations in various parts of the country provide technical assistance for educators and community leaders who wish to start up service programs. For example, the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence in New York City provides extensive materials and videos for schools on how to build reflection into any service program, on developing different kinds of service learning programs for middle schoolers, and on replicating their tried and true Adolescent Helper Program, which places 12-14-year-olds in daycare and senior centers. State or regional service learning centers are invaluable components of a network of community service opportunities.

Train staff in community based organizations. In order for meaningful service learning opportunities to be available for young people, community agencies and local groups need to be equipped to use young volunteers effectively. To this end, the Points of Light Foundation, through its network of 400 local volunteer centers, has begun an initiative to create "communities as places of learning." These centers are designing workshops and training programs to be offered to the staffs of community based organizations such as the local Red Cross to help them make good use of young people.

Collaborate with other community institutions. The African saying, "It takes a whole village to raise a child" speaks well to the need for a variety of people to be involved in the education of children. As the following chapter shows, colleges and universities can be important partners in K-12 education and youth development. Some youth corps also work with younger children—for example, the East Bay Conservation Corps, which runs an afterschool environmental club called Project YES. Adult volunteer organizations, such as Mentors Inc. in Washington, D.C., which pairs over 400 adults with schoolchildren in the District, are also important resources for schools.

Conduct research and evaluation. We need to learn more about district and state strategies for establishing service learning fully in schools and other community based organizations, evaluate different approaches, and develop "best practices," especially ones that leverage various resources and are cost-efficient. We also need to encourage further longitudinal studies on the impact of service learning on young people and their communities.

Education is largely a state and local responsibility, so states and school districts would be principally responsible for designing and implementing

service learning initiatives for school-aged youths. However, the Commission has been given the responsibility by Congress to help catalyze and support such initiatives, and we are well aware that in the past year the demand in the field far exceeded our resources, particularly for leadership grants to states and school districts with promising and innovative proposals.

College and university students can extend these resources and help reach the goals we have set forth, especially through mentoring and summer programs. It is to this age group that we now turn.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century, 1989. The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's Task Force on the Education of Young Adolescents, p. 70.

[2] The Forgotten Half: Pathways To Success for American's Youth and Young Families, 1988. William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship. Washington, D.C., p. 83.

[3] Cohen, P.A., Kulik, J.A., and Kulik, C.L. (1982). Educational outcomes of tutoring: a meta-analysis of findings." American Educational Research Journal, 19 (2), pp. 237-248.

[4] Levin, Henry M. (1984). Costs and cost-effectiveness of computer-assisted instruction. Stanford, CA California Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance (ERIC Document No. ED 252915).

[5] National Education Goals Report (1992) cites the National Center for Education Statistics as their source for this statistic, p. 79.

[6] Hedin and Conrad (1981). "National assessment of of experiential education: summary and implications." Journal of Experiential Education, 4 (2), pp. 6-20.

[7] The Forgotten Half, p. 80.

[8] Robert Shumer, WalkAbout (1992) Program Evaluation: Preliminary Draft. Prepared for National Youth Leadership Council, November 1992, p. 16.

Community Service in Higher Education

Chapter 4

These West Virginia college students are spending their Thanksgiving vacation providing back-breaking hurricane relief.

Higher education is one of the cornerstones for the broad-based, life-long network of community service opportunities that we would like to see in this country. Service experiences during this critical period of growth have a powerful impact on students' choices concerning careers and life interests. And already, colleges and universities are places from which a new generation of leaders in the community service field is emerging.

Recently, when Gretchen Givens, a senior at Spelman College, arrived at King Middle School in Atlanta to do her regular tutoring with a sixth-grader named Cordy, something about her usually lackadaisical tutee had changed. On her last visit, Gretchen had gotten into a long discussion with him about Malcolm X, and this time Cordy had come prepared. "He [was] all fired up," Gretchen recalled, "and articulating thoughts that he probably wouldn't have expressed in regular class time, but he'd gone home and done some reading and research on his own!"

Experiences like this are a wonderful — and normal — part of Gretchen's life. Last year, along with most of her Delta Sigma Theta sorority sisters, she volunteered about ten hours a week in programs for neighborhood kids. "You just schedule community service in along with your classes," she explains.

Gretchen did not begin college this way. But with the guidance of the Spelman Office of Community Service, she began tutoring in a local community center in her sophomore year. "The first week I left crying every day," she recalls, "because the kids were just inadequately prepared to do their homework. I decided that year that education was something I wanted to work in, but in such a way as to try to make a difference on a larger scale." This decision took her to Northwestern University this past summer on a research project studying education policy, and now she is applying to Ph.D. programs in education.

If Gretchen's story shows how campus community service can positively shape a student's life, then the University of Pennsylvania's experience in West Philadelphia shows what it can do for a whole institution and a whole neighborhood.

"You can't passively teach active participation in society."

Ben Barber
Rutgers' professor of political science

Middle school students can learn about medicine and science through involvement in university-sponsored community health center projects.

One evening last May, the auditorium at Turner Middle School was bustling: parents, neighbors and friends waited patiently until the students kicked off the spring Healthwatch on hypertension. (Last term's session covered colon and breast cancer.) Khalila Butler, a 7th grader, began to rap to an attentive audience about the hidden dangers of high blood pressure. Then she joined her classmates at the screening area, to help a physician from the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center take blood pressure, fill out family medical history questionnaires, and discuss ways that patients could alter their diet to prevent high blood pressure. For weeks, Khalila and her classmates had studied hypertension's causes and risk prevention measures, and prepared bright pink posters and flyers titled "Hypertension: the 'Silent Killer' among African-Americans." And on this day, 80 people from the neighborhood received a professional medical screening.

Complaints about colleges and universities being elitist institutions, unconcerned about the problems at their very doorsteps, aren't common among those who get screened at Healthwatches. That's because these

community services are provided as part of the curriculum taught in the local public school by University of Pennsylvania undergraduates and medical school students.

The program is just one of many run by the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC), a community based, non-profit organization, originally the brainchild of four Penn undergraduates in 1985. Inspired by a class on university-community relations — taught by history professor Ira Harkavy and the President of the University, Sheldon Hackney — these four students drew up a proposal to create WEPIC. The goal was to make a difference in West Philadelphia, where the university is located, one of the poorest school districts in the country: 44% of the children live below the poverty level and 65% of children entering 9th grade at West Philadelphia High School do not graduate.

This year over 1400 children, parents, and community residents are involved through WEPIC in housing rehabilitation, landscaping, health education, and arts and crafts. Every week, hundreds of Penn's students and dozens of its faculty and staff volunteer in the local schools. Last year Turner Middle School improved its overall citywide test scores by 6%. And Turner students in the WEPIC enrichment program scored 14% above the school's previous level.

Spelman and the University of Pennsylvania are typical of many of our colleges and universities—they're located in poor communities with deep social problems. Often promontories of accomplishment in desperate environments, institutions of higher education can, through vigorous service, be beacons of hope for the local community. However, the potential of college students and their institutions has only just begun to be tapped.

"Elementary kids don't even know we exist, even though [Spelman] is right here in their community. We feel an obligation to get out there and show them that ... we are African-American women going to college, and studying things like math. When the kids get to know me they begin to understand that they might be able to go to college too."

Lisa Gary
NASA Scholar in mathematics at Spelman College, and founder of the Storytelling Project, a reading program for local school children.

Current Situation

The seeds of town/gown partnerships have been planted on hundreds of campuses—dating back to the campus YMCA's first started in the 1880's at among others, the University of Virginia, the University of Minnesota, to more recent efforts at Mesa Community College in Arizona and Bentley College in Massachusetts—yet in the 1980s, a major upturn began that's now carrying college community service far beyond its earlier base. It was driven in large part by visionary leaders—students, faculty members, and college presidents—who were determined to reverse the trend toward a "me generation."

Students have mobilized hundreds of their classmates in various community service projects through campus religious groups, fraternities and sororities, ethnic centers and other student organizations. Colleges have turned over office space for volunteer centers, and hired students or staff

members to help coordinate volunteer activities on campus. More and more faculty are using service-learning in their academic courses.

Today, the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL)—the national student community service organization started in 1983 by a recent college graduate, Wayne Meisel (now a member of the Commission), in order to promote and facilitate student service—works with students and faculty at more than 650 public, private, four-year and two-year colleges and universities. More than 300 college and university presidents have joined Campus Compact, a national network (also begun in 1983) of service-minded institutions of higher education. (Tom Ehrlich, the chairman of the Commission Board, is also the chairman of Campus Compact.) Additionally, 150 colleges and universities recognize for academic credit the semester-long, intensive service learning programs offered by the Partnership for Service Learning. New graduates have started other national student service organizations such as SCALE, a national student literacy campaign, and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness.

Campus Compact estimates that during the 1991-92 academic year, more than 140,000 students at its 305 member schools were involved in weekly community service. They provided about 8,500,000 hours of service, and others provided more than an additional 1,000,000 hours in one-day events.

As impressive as these numbers are, it is important to note that COOL and Campus Compact schools are only a small part of the more than 3,600 institutions of higher education in the country. (No firm data has been collected on a national basis.) And, even at Campus Compact colleges, the 140,000 students doing weekly service are a minority of all students.

Furthermore, changes in the college population, with the majority of students now being nontraditional—older, part-time, working, and with families—also present a challenge to the college community service movement. These students face difficult barriers to service that institutions of higher education and national consortia are only just beginning to address.

At least three important observations about the student service movement can be made:

1. ***Students learn and grow most when their community service is part of structured learning experiences such as reflective seminars or academic classes.*** Close to one third of Stanford's freshman class chooses freshman

English classes in which students volunteer to write brochures, newsletters, and grant proposals for local nonprofit organizations. "Writing for an organization," reflected one participant, "seemed much more purposeful and meaningful than just writing something so a teacher could see that you can write. It forced me to write better because someone was actually going to read it and care what it said."

The power of civic education comes when students are asked to put into practice the theories of morality and citizenship that they learn in class. Van Truong Le, a recent graduate of Harvard, articulates well what can be heard from students all across the country: "Substantial community work is the best ethical training you can get. Sure, Aristotle, Locke, and Kant can teach you moral philosophy.... But if you are working in a homeless shelter and a homeless man is being disruptive, when you decide whether to kick him out for the benefit of the other guests or to let him stay because you know he'll be on the street otherwise, you are making a minor ethical choice that has real consequences for another human being. You'll remember that experience!"

Team training for a college service project provides an opportunity for students and faculty to work together.

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Because it inherently involves the experience of real-world variables and constraints, good service learning typifies what higher education is supposed to be about: exploring new terrain, subjecting one's views to practical tests, questioning, challenging one another to improve the level of knowledge and to put it to good use. It's not just students practicing to be leaders; it is students *being* leaders.

2. ***College students are important visionaries and generators of the college community service movement and the national service movement as a whole.*** Many campus-based programs are already leading parts of the emerging national service network and many others have produced leaders who have gone on to play key roles in other programs in this network, such as COOL and City Year. Other leaders emerge on their own: When Rachel Vaughn arrived as a freshman at Western Washington University in the fall of 1990, she found no volunteer center, no tutoring programs, and no student service organization. Having been deeply involved in community service in her own high school, she complained in a speech at a local school that she was going through "service withdrawal." After one of the teachers in the audience expressed the need for college role models, Vaughn started LINK, a mentoring program for high school students (and a Commission grantee).

At first, Vaughn ran things out of her dorm room, enlisting 40 student volunteers for two hours a week. "It was all through word of mouth," she reports. "We had no money, no reflection, no planned activities, no evaluation, and only one training session—that I ran!" Now, two years later, LINK has five student coordinators, paid through work-study funds, and its 50 volunteers are working in all five local middle and high schools. Last fall, Vaughn and fellow students wrote a successful proposal for a $3,000 grant from Campus Compact (actually a subgrant of Commission funds) to train mentors to meet the special needs of Native American youngsters.

Vaughn's success with LINK has helped the president of Western Washington see the power of service. In the past year President Kenneth Mortimer has taken the lead in creating Washington State Campus Compact, which now includes 13 of the state's universities and colleges working together to generate community service opportunities for their students. "Because Rachel is here," says the State Compact director, "all of us are here."

3. ***Colleges and universities gain from promoting community involvement.*** Because community service programs and related courses contribute to the education of students, to the development of ethical and civic-

When Rachel Vaughn arrived at Western Washington University, she found no volunteer center, no tutoring programs, and no student service organization. Now, two years later, there are five student coordinators, paid through work-study funds, and their 50 volunteers are working in all five local middle and high schools. "Because Rachel is here," says one service director, "all of us are here."

minded leaders, and to building more collaborative relationships between faculty and students, they are a powerful means of fulfilling the institutions' basic mission of producing and transmitting knowledge.

In an anthropology class at the University of Pennsylvania, where students designed and taught a health curriculum to middle school kids, the professor, Dr. Francis Johnston, collected enough data on the health status of inner city children to produce two scholarly articles for publication. He had never done this kind of "participatory action research" before, but is now sold on it as a teaching method. "You don't feel like you're stealing time from research to do service!" he exclaims. Furthermore, Johnston says, "Every single student was involved in the class without question. That never happens regularly!"

Given the wide range of service possibilities, it's not hard to see how service could enrich both the undergraduate and graduate experience, no matter what the academic major: First an orientation week service project, then weekly tutoring, an alternative spring break volunteering in Appalachia, then courses with service components, later on running that tutoring program and expanding it. Then perhaps a senior thesis building on field experiences, and a postgraduate stint in VISTA, Peace Corps Fellow Programs, or Teach For America. In short, service could be a formative part of every student's college life.

Often all it takes to get college students involved is to provide the structure through which they can volunteer and learn. As Lisa Kelly's story (see box below) shows, students will flock to opportunities.

The Commission's Role

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Commission committed 75 percent of its educational grants to K-12 and 25 percent, or $5.6 million, to higher education. The decision to allocate fewer funds to higher education was made because the number of young people in elementary and secondary schools far exceeds that in higher education, and because we understood that colleges and universities have greater access to other sources of funds.

We received 300 applications for higher education grants, of which 126 came from public colleges and universities, 96 came from private four-year institutions, 25 came from community colleges and Indian

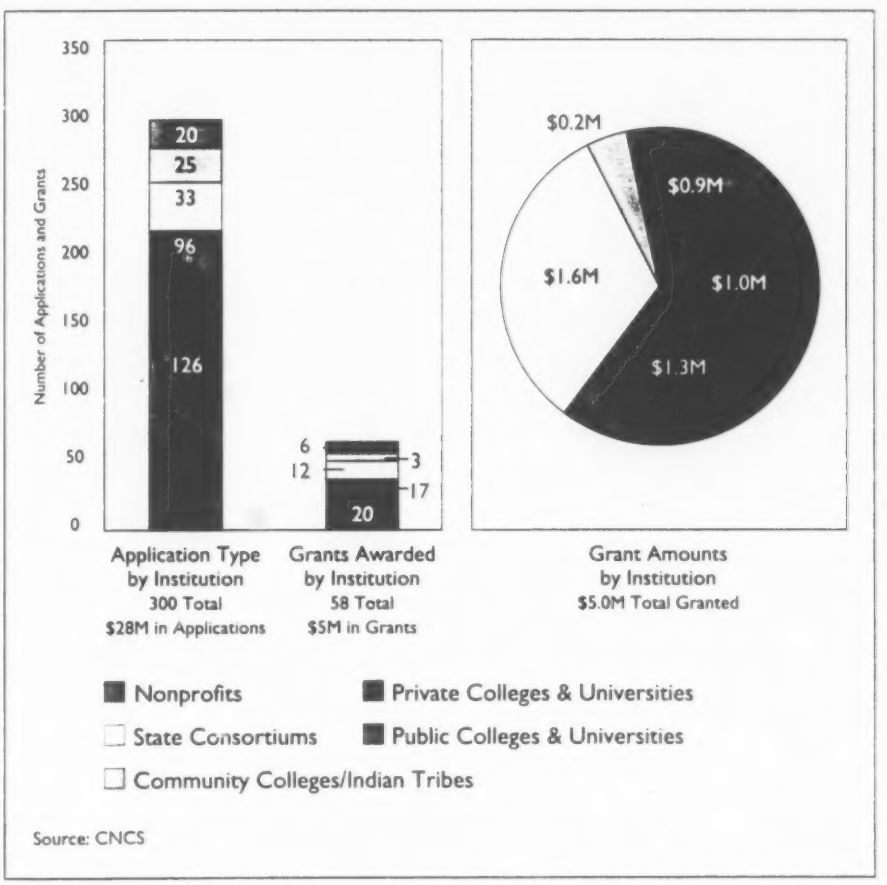
Tribes. The rest came from state consortiums and nonprofits. The Commission awarded 58 grants for programs in over 200 colleges and universities. (See chart 4.1) Most fell into four categories:

1. ***Supporting multi-institution programs and building infrastructure.*** Two-thirds of the funds in this subtitle were given to collaborative programs among multiple colleges, or to national and state level organizations that will conduct their own subgranting processes. Examples:

- Campus Compact received $500,000 to develop state compacts, disseminate model service learning curricula throughout higher education, build community service programs at historically black and community colleges, and encourage the development of mentoring programs.
- Six New Haven area colleges and universities, including Gateway Community Technical College, Southern Connecticut State University, and Yale, received a grant to run a summer program for children in the city's housing projects. With it, last summer, 50 student/counselors lived in New Haven projects and provided academic and recreational activities for 250 neighborhood children.
- SCALE, a network of over 600 college literacy projects, started by students at the University of North Carolina in

Chart 4.1

Higher Education Applicants and Grantees, FY92



Source: CNCS

Changing Many Lives

"Like many [Notre Dame] students, I was on college work-study trying to support myself in school. To my dismay, I had been assigned to work in the student cafeteria....It wasn't a bad job except at the end of the night when all the leftovers would come back in, food that had been cooked only one hour earlier. It became my job to throw it out. Night after night entire industrial-sized trash cans were filled with food: soup, salad, meat, pasta, you name it....It broke my heart. I asked other workers if anyone had ever thought of using the food, but they had been dismayed by health laws, and the prospect of staying on after an already long eight hour shift to package the food.

Every night on my way home from work, I walked past a building called the Center for Social Concerns. One night I stopped in and that one night changed many lives because what I found in that building was not someone to take care of the problem for me, but rather others who would enable me to solve the problem. The Center for Social Concerns provided me with the use of a van to transport the food and supported me as I approached upper-level members of the administration with a plan to let students, volunteering their time, take the left-over food to the local homeless shelter. I was also given a place to meet and coordinate the program, which came to be called Foodshare. And in its first year, the students of Foodshare served over 20,000 meals to men, women, and children without a home.

But the Center for Social Concerns did something even more....it enabled me to meet other students like myself, who had come to realize that the best way to change the world may actually be in service to others, one meal at a time. On the first night we asked for students to volunteer for Foodshare, we needed 35. Over 200 signed up. Among them I met another student who shared my enthusiasm for service, and six months ago that fellow student became my husband....My husband and I are now both teaching high school, trying to instill in our students the value of service to others that had been passed on to us."

— Lisa Kelly, recent Notre Dame graduate, in a tribute
to former Notre Dame President Father Theodore Hesburgh

1989, provides subgrants to students launching literacy projects on additional campuses.

The Commission also awarded a discretionary grant to support COOL's new initiative of "Road Scholars," who will be traveling to campuses nationwide to provide peer technical assistance to community service programs, and to further diversify the socio-economic and ethnic composition of the campus service movement.

2. ***Building service learning into teacher training***: Service-oriented training for this and the next generation of K-12 teachers seems essential. Yet as far as we are aware, few teacher training institutions in the country include service learning as a substantial part of their programs. We funded several experimental programs in this area:

- This year, as a result of a Commission grant, Clark Atlanta University has made service learning a part of its required full-year freshman seminar, and is providing courses for undergraduate teacher education students on service learning pedagogy. In addition, all of Clark Atlanta's education graduate students are paired with Atlanta high schools to help the latters' students perform the service work required for high school graduation.
- Temple University's School of Social Administration is collaborating on a project with the Philadelphia public schools, in which graduate students and faculty are developing a community service learning program for and with ninth graders. This program is providing service learning training for both current teachers and future social workers.
- Stanford's School of Education has joined with four local school districts, two local foundations, and three community-based youth-serving organizations to design a summer institute for faculty, students, school teachers and administrators to develop service learning curricula and to learn evaluation and dissemination techniques. This effort will reach current and future teachers and other school personnel.

3. ***Encouraging innovative models of tutoring and mentoring***: This is an area where needs are great, and where college students can make a considerable contribution. We made grants to a variety of models in this area:

- St. Edwards College in Austin, Texas, received a grant to expand a mentoring program in which students from migrant families mentor at-risk children in the public schools. Not only do the younger students benefit from their college role models, but the mentoring program has also increased the retention rate of the migrant students.

Not only do students in local schools benefit from college role models, but the mentoring program at St. Edward's College has increased the retention rate of the migrant college students who volunteer as mentors. "Mentoring gives me a positive outlook on college," says one St. Edward's student, Esmeralda Lozano. "Many of the students...would have packed it in and gone home if it hadn't been for this program."

The exciting thing for faculty and college students who get involved with the schools is that the involvement can provide the sort of intellectual integration across several fields that is difficult to achieve amidst the departmental structure of a research university.

Sheldon Hackney
President
University of Pennsylvania

- At Arrowhead Community College, in Duluth, Minnesota, over 135 students serve as mentors and tutors in a local tribal school and an adult learning center. Courses related to literacy and the needs of local youth are also being developed through the departments of Multicultural Studies, Human Services, and Ojibwe Studies.
- At the University of North Alabama, social work students who are also single mothers (many of whom were once on public assistance) are pairing up as mentors with non-college single mothers from the local public housing complex.

4. ***Sponsoring other promising innovations***, for example:

- A partnership between Bentley College, a small business college in Waltham, Massachusetts, and a local community development organization geared toward getting homeless people back into homes and jobs. Accounting students are helping the organization, Project Place, plan its budget, and management students are helping it purchase a retail franchise so that its clients can learn how to manage and run a business.
- INVST (International and National Voluntary Service Training): The University of Colorado at Boulder has developed a program aimed at training a small group of undergraduate students to become change agents. Students take specially designed seminars including ones on facilitating community development, and on democracy and nonviolent movements. In addition, they are immersed in year-round community service including summer projects on an Indian reservation and in Jamaica, and in school-year internships at local non-profits. And all the participants commit to two years of full-time community-based service after graduation.

The Way Forward

On the strength of the many examples we have seen and heard about over the past year, together with the wisdom of leading practitioners and the lessons learned by our own grantees, we suggest the following two goals for consideration, and outline some of the early steps that would be needed for the country to realize them:

1. ***Most colleges and universities in the country should be offering a wide variety of opportunities for students to do worthwhile service in their communities.*** Students who do community service find their college learning experiences greatly enriched. They provide valuable services to others, and often develop insights, skills, self-confidence, and even career plans that they would not have developed otherwise.

Our observations suggest that an effective way to ensure such opportunities is for colleges and universities to establish community service centers that serve as clearinghouses for volunteers and service opportunities, help students create new service ventures, provide structured leadership development, and assist faculty members to develop service learning courses. Of course community service centers do not just spontaneously spring up. Start-up funding would be needed to pay center coordinators, who are essential to a successful program. Three possible sources of funding are: a) the institutions of higher education themselves, b) specific Congressional appropriations, or c) federal work-study funds. Since we see opportunities for service as integral to the educational process, such centers would normally be included in regular college budgets. Some provide such funding already, although those facing budget cuts are reducing their support for fledgling service programs.

The option to draw on federal work-study funds needs elaboration. Last year, $791 million was spent by the federal government for students on work-study[1]—only one-fifth of one percent of it on community service-related activities. But, beginning in 1994, colleges and universities will be required by law to use 5 percent of their work-study funds to support students doing service, and colleges will be permitted to use additional work-study money for administrative expenses related to service learning programs.[2] This means that an additional 40 million dollars' worth of student time may soon be put towards community service—more than seven times what the Commission spends directly on community service in higher education. If $20 million of this were used to fund five students per campus (at $3,000 per student) to start and staff a community service center, in one year 1,333 centers could be created. Because of that kind of leverage, the Congress, the Commission and the Department of Education should study the feasibility of using additional work-study funds for community service.

Accounting students can use class projects to help local businesses implement community service plans.

Students from low-income families face another barrier to service: The need to earn money to help pay for their education. The privately funded Bonner Scholars Program addresses this problem by providing an average of $3000 per year to 900 students on financial aid, in exchange for which they are expected to provide ten hours of community service a week during school and full-time during the summer. The success of the program

At some universities, well over half the students do community service projects such as tutoring.

demonstrates that students from modest economic backgrounds are eager and qualified to serve when given the opportunity. By using the 5 percent of work-study funds earmarked for community service, an additional 13,000 students could make commitments similar to the Bonner Scholars.

A similar obstacle to service is faced by students in the "new majority" - older, working, often part-time, and often with dependents. One key here could be to enable them to integrate studies and service through offering course credit. For example, Nikola Litven, a young single mother who had just returned to school at Seattle Central Community College, passed the Pike Market Senior Center for homeless and low-income elders every day as she took her son to daycare. Then she learned that she could volunteer there and get credit towards her degree through a program in the Cooperative Education Department at Seattle Central. Now she spends about four hours a week at the Center helping out the staff and developing a weekly women's circle. "I would like," Litven says now, "to be a nurse at a public health clinic or a social worker and...hopefully working here, getting this experience working with older people, will help me get into a nursing or social work program."

Other students who are juggling long commutes to college, jobs, and families, have a more difficult time than Litven finding suitable ways to volunteer. To reduce obstacles to service, Campus Compact has recently set up the Center for Community Colleges, based at Mesa Community College in Arizona, that among other things, is providing grants of Commission funds to colleges, including Seattle Central.

2. ***Institutions of higher education in every state and metropolitan area should be making substantial contributions to meeting key public priorities***: school reform, community revitalization, and leadership development for the community service field. All three of these are areas in which higher education is qualified to make major contributions. While some could be funded by the Commission, many could be developed with resources from universities themselves, community foundations, corporations, and alumni.

- ***School reform.*** College students are especially effective mentors and tutors, and they can reinforce overstretched teachers. In fact, if every college student in America were to adopt a schoolchild, every single one of the 14 million kids living in poverty could benefit from a personal coach, positive role model and adult friend. Moreover, teacher training institutions should build the concepts of service learning into the basic concepts of teaching.
- ***Community revitalization.*** Partnerships between institutions of higher education and community groups could be multi-faceted, such as the one depicted above between groups at the University of Pennsylvania and their numerous community counterparts, or one-on-one, like the collaboration mentioned earlier between Bentley College and a local community organization, Project Place. New Jersey's experimental national service grant (discussed in Chapter 6) is another example: A partnership between the state government, local school districts and the state university that's focused on revitalizing inner-city schools.
- ***Leadership development.*** The community service field will need many new service leaders in the next few years, and institutions of higher education are well-suited to help develop them. Approaches might include:
  - *Structured programs*, created by community service centers, to provide training sessions and service learning workshops, arrange mentoring relationships, and offer summer internships for student leaders of service programs. (Some institutions are already well on their way to providing these opportunities.)
  - *Year-round programs parallel to the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).* These could be along the lines of the INVST program at the University of Colorado. Students would commit to two to four years of

This year at Stanford almost three hundred and seventy-five freshman are performing research, and writing grant proposals and newsletters for community agencies through their mandatory freshman writing course. Around nine hundred students there will take at least one of thirty service courses this year.

Linda Cheu
Young People's National Service Coalition,
at Commission hearings,
Los Angeles

academic preparation and service practica during the school year and summers, as well as to a number of years in community service leadership positions after graduation - with youth corps, for example.

▼ *Special concentrations within majors, making heavy use of service learning.* For instance, not only would a biology department offer an emphasis in public health and require students involved to do in-depth service projects at a public health clinic that would then lead directly into a senior thesis, but these students would also participate in special seminars concerned with different styles and philosophies of leadership, determining and addressing community needs, etc., and they would be mentored by proven leaders in their field.

Progress towards these goals, our work to date suggests, will pay great dividends for higher education, for the communities in which institutions active in community service are located, and for the country. While achievement of both suggested goals is well beyond the reach of the Commission's resources, we do intend to give preference to grant applications that broaden student service opportunities and address key public priorities by integrating service into the curriculum and by building partnerships between community service efforts on college and university campuses and service initiatives in elementary or secondary classrooms or corps.

FOOTNOTES

[1] As authorized by 42 U.S.C. 2751

[2] Higher Education Amendments of 1992, Pub. L. 102-325, title IV, section 443

Youth Corps: Reconnecting America's Youth

Chapter 5

Corps members sometimes give presentations and guided tours to elementary school students.

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What You Can Do For Your Country

When Willie Thornton was 15, college would have been just another place to break into. He was a Crip, stealing cars, joy riding and selling the parts. It was his probation officer who suggested that he join the Los Angeles Conservation Corps. Based on the interview process, in which showing up and wanting to get in is 90 percent of it, he was accepted. Then he was paid a small stipend and put to work cleaning up graffiti, helping businesses recycle, and studying for his G.E.D. In a little over a year and a half, Willie went from corps member to assistant crew supervisor, to an assistant for LACC's junior high school program, Clean and Green. When Willie scored high on the G.E.D., one of the LACC staff members encouraged him to apply to college. He did and received a $15,000 Bonner scholarship to Morehouse College, where he will start classes in the spring.

Active urban corps mean visible and substantial rebuilding efforts in our inner cities.

In every city, suburb, and rural community in America, there are many Willie Thorntons. They grow up in rich families as well as poor ones, in intact families and ruptured ones, in families that are educated and those that are not. For all these differences, they have this much in common: They do not feel connected to the larger society and can't see how to make a dent in it. They can't see tomorrow or at least can't see one that's different from today. They are pressured to do what their friends do, instead of what's right for themselves. Many want to work, but lack the skills or discipline to do so. Many are anti-social, often not because it is their nature, but because that's how you survive at the mall or in the "hood."

Youth corps can offer these young people a great deal, especially the "forgotten half" of our young people who don't go to college, the 10 million 16- to 24-year-olds who don't have jobs and aren't in school, the military, or prison. For those who lack direction, good corps offer structure and intensity. For those who've been talked down to or abused, corps offer respect. For youth who are isolated from their families, from their communities, and from each other, well-run corps offer common goals and the teamwork it takes to achieve them. It's this collection of virtues that enables corps to turn Mallrats, Crips, Preps and other young people into citizens, taking responsibility for solving the problems in their communities.

For example, one Saturday morning in Los Angeles, not long after the riots, a bunch of LACC's Clean and Green kids in green hard hats and matching T-shirts pile out of a van at the corner of 2nd and Lucas. Armed with shovels and trash bags, they're here to work with kids from Belmont High on a neighborhood clean-up. They quickly organize into teams, sweeping their way down 2nd towards a trash-filled park. When the crews get to the park, they'll take a rest break, and then they'll clean it and then more sidewalks. But on their way there, a wonderful thing happens. A few minutes after they sweep up in front of a house in the middle of the block, the door opens and a man comes out and starts picking up the litter in his own yard. Nobody told him to, but he got the message. A message that service sends loud and clear.

On the other side of the country in the Morningside Heights area of upper Manhattan, you can see more unmistakable proof of what youth corps are about. On the north side of 120th near Frederick Douglass Boulevard, there's yet another useless and garbage-filled lot; on the other is the cute little playground and park built by a crew of another Commission grantee, the City Volunteer Corps. Do youth corps matter? Well, one of the women who works at the children's center next door calls it the neighborhood's "pocket of peace."

Helping transform their communities helps corps members transform themselves. When they see the positive difference they make, and so do their peers, their self-esteem soars and their sense of what is possible flourishes.

Making communities better is what youth corps are all about. They have the potential of tapping the entrepreneurial capacity, the leadership skills, and unflagging energy too many youth waste on drug rings, street

The service movement should really be as inclusive as possible. When I look at the service corps, I don't see people from different socioeconomic and ethnic and educational backgrounds. I look at people who are all dreamers. Individually, our dreams may be different, but collectively, you know, our dream is for a different community, for better personal advancement.

Matt Governor
Corps member
DC Service Corps, at
Commission hearings,
Washington, D.C.

gangs, and television. Given the opportunity and the right organization, corps members can plant gardens to improve the beats cops walk on, tutor children who become more excited about school, and clear trails to make parks more accessible to the public.

In addition to providing young people the opportunity to serve, youth corps can teach corps members longer-term job skills like fire fighting, masonry, blueprint reading, landscaping, and drywalling. For 24 year-old single mother Gloria Perez, these skills are opening up her eyes, her job opportunities, and her sense of what's possible. Before joining the Milwaukee Community Service Corps (a Commission grantee), Gloria didn't imagine she would enjoy construction. But then her team reconstructed a home that will be rented at affordable rates by the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Fund. With the encouragement of her crew supervisors, she's now determined to get a carpentry apprenticeship. Gloria is especially proud of the 120 year-old window frames that she removed, repaired, repainted, fitted, and re-installed.

And perhaps best of all, corps service when designed to do so, can be a way to unite young people of different races, classes, genders, educational attainment, and physical abilities. In corps, young people, with all their differences, must work as a team. As one member of the California Conservation Corps recently put it, "I trust my CCC friends more than people I have known five times as long."

While the research in this field is scant, there is some indication the youth corps experience makes young people more tolerant of those different from themselves. For instance, in a study on participants in New York's City Volunteer Corps, conducted by Public/Private Ventures, a social policy research and demonstration firm, there was evidence that corps members became more understanding of people with disabilities, the elderly and the homeless—all groups of people they had served. Better still, one to two years after the program, over 35 percent of the CVC members surveyed continue to be involved in community centers and neighborhood improvement organizations, and nearly two-thirds registered to vote.[1]

So, the promise of youth corps is great. But realizing this promise is not easy for corps, most of which operate on a shoestring. Many scramble constantly for remunerative work, often settling for repetitive menial labor that doesn't readily satisfy their community service mission and frequently leaves little time for reflective learning. They need truly dedicated staff

members but can only offer them wages well below the private sector's, with few benefits, if any—thus creating high turnover. And most of them struggle with high corps member attrition rates. At their best, corps offer life-changing experiences; at the other extreme they offer little more than minimum wage employment. If more corps move towards the best, more young people will reconnect with their own communities, and their own potential.

Current Situation

The youth service and conservation corps of today have roots dating back to 1933, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which grew to 500,000 strong at a time and employed over 3 million young men and 1 young woman in public works projects over a nine-year period. In the 1970s the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC) were established within the Departments of Interior and Agriculture. At its height, YCC enabled 32,000 young people to serve in summer programs at an annual cost of $60 million, and at its maximum, YACC enrolled 25,000 16-23 year-olds in a year-round program at a cost of $250 million. Both were reduced in size and then their funding eliminated during departmental budget cuts between 1981 and 1984.

The late Mother Hale, who worked tirelessly with crack-addicted babies, has become a role model for many young people involved in community service.

In 1976, Governor Jerry Brown, inspired by the old CCC, introduced the California Conservation Corps, the seminal model for a new group of non-federal corps. Other states and localities followed California's lead, producing the likes of the San Francisco Conservation Corps and the Washington (State) Service Corps in 1983 and the Iowa Conservation Corps and the New York City Volunteer Corps in 1984. More recently, with considerable foundation support, Public/Private Ventures and the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) jointly established 12 urban service corps designed to incorporate the best practices from existing corps.

According to NASCC, in 1991 13,284 young people (ages 16-26) participated in year-round full-time corps and 4,107 in summer activities. These corps members served in 58 local and state corps in 26 states and the District of Columbia. In addition, over 500 youth were involved in other full-time corps programs run by YouthBuild and another 1,000 were

involved in year-round part-time corps programs such as those run by Youth Volunteer Corps, bringing the total involved in year-round service close to 15,000.

These existing youth corps slots are unevenly distributed with respect to both geography and need. Nearly half the states don't have a single corps. Even in California, which has the most youth corps—1 state and 8 local corps—the total of 2,524 corps slots accommodates only three-fifths of one percent of the state's 18-year-olds. Similarly, in 1992, New York's City Volunteer Corps had to turn away 800 applicants after the program's 700 slots were filled. Four corps were eliminated in the last two years under acute state budget pressures.

Service corps have been traditionally strong in rural America—and they still are.

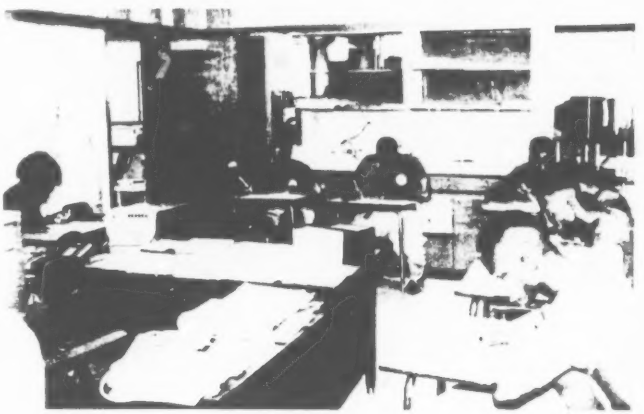
The standard youth corps is a non-residential program employing teams made up of five to ten young people between 18-23 years old, most from a disadvantaged background. Corps members work for between $100 and $170 per week. In many of the corps, unskilled physical labor is the main staple: Cleaning graffiti, clearing park trails, and painting cabins. But a good many tasks also require the development of at least basic construction skills.

A few state corps, California's and Florida's among them, have residential centers, which facilitate service in remote areas and enable these corps to include homeless youth and those living in troubled family situations.

Ingredients of Strong Youth Corps

During our first year, we have noted several key ingredients that we believe are associated with strong programs:

Meaningful service. One of the most important ingredients of a good corps is corps members doing service that makes a difference in their communities. Making a difference could be converting old railroad stations into public libraries, teaching young children who have cerebral palsy how to ride horses, or protecting an endangered species. Throughout the country we have seen young people doing real work, not "make-work" (which can be very discouraging for a young person). However, while there are an endless number of potentially meaningful service opportunities, only a small number of them can pay for the service of corps members. As a result, many youth corps are balancing the tension that sometimes occurs between engaging corps members in meaningful service and taking on fee-for-service work projects that will help pay for corps members' stipends and educational programs.



G.E.D. training is an integral part of the service corps experience.

Education, skills development, and service learning. At their best, corps are not only about producing end products like playgrounds, park benches, or bridges. What a good corps mostly produces is less tangible—but considerably more valuable. Willie Thornton is a good example of how, through service work, corps members can develop self-esteem and confidence. And with the guidance of crew supervisors, corps members begin to see their service in a larger context—that is, begin to develop social and political awareness. In a word, they become citizens. For example, when a crew of LACC corps members clears a hiking trail in the Santa Monica mountains, Crew Supervisor Pedro Martinez uses this opportunity to explain how the trees help cleanse polluted air. And you can tell that Pedro has left his mark when a corps member, who in his pre-corps days enjoyed kicking cats, is now taking special care not to disturb the trail's snakes and spiders.

Corps service gives members the opportunity to develop practical job-keeping skills like punctuality, teamwork and respect for authority. And increasingly, corps are also teaching job-getting skills, using résumé workshops, guided scanning of want ads, and mock interviews. There is also the potential for developing people-to-people skills like project coordination, negotiation, and conflict resolution.

Nearly all corps arrange for corps members to continue their educational preparation in G.E.D. courses, in English as a Second Language classes, or in community college courses. The East Bay Conservation Corps has developed such an effective program that it is now certified by the Oakland School District as an alternative high school and is used by a population beyond the corps members.

Many corps are ingenious about developing projects that provide opportunities to learn academic skills. When the Swinomish Tribal Community Service Team of the Washington (State) Service Corps, a Commission grantee, excavated a tribal fishing village, the Native American teenagers who comprised the team learned many techniques of archeology, including sample identification and classification, and detailed journal-keeping, which a supervising professor said was "college-level." One crew of the Wisconsin Conservation Corps used its thirty-minute drive to the worksite as an opportunity to discuss upcoming national elections. Another WCC crew went a step further—crew members spent an afternoon at a library researching election arguments for more formal group presentations.

Many corps are adding human service efforts such as this tutoring project to their repertoire.

Learning the practical, applying the academic, understanding the bigger picture, and developing oneself is what young people can do in some of the best corps. However, these benefits of service do not automatically occur just because young people are doing service. Major emphasis on service learning is not a "nice-to-have" feature for corps; it's a "must-have."

Variety of service assignments. Corps members have a more valuable and interesting experience when they are rotated through several different service assignments. This gives them the opportunity to learn new skills, to discover their talents, and exposes them to the multitude of ways they can serve their community. Some corps focusing on conservation work do this by rotating their members through a curbside recycling program one week, improving wetlands the next, and installing solar panels the week after.

Other corps have increased the variety by involvement in the human service arena. For instance, the Washington (State) Service Corps in Tacoma, City Volunteer Corps in New York, and the DC Service Corps in Washington, D.C. are mentoring elementary school students, counseling Amerasian refugees, delivering meals to people with AIDS, and serving as case aides for homebound elderly residents. One of the great benefits of this development is that it taps a marvelous empathy that often even the toughest kids turn out to have for other people. "I was afraid of deaf people at first," says Charles, a CVC volunteer on a Harlem Hospital project, "I didn't want them to come near me. But now I shake their hands and hug them."

For many corps members we interviewed, whether they primarily did conservation or human service projects, the meaning of service didn't sink in until they understood that their work truly made a difference in another person's life. For an LACC corps member, clearing a trail didn't seem very important until a hiker walked by and thanked her and her team. When Wautoma citizens praised them for helping clean up after a tornado, WCC corps members realized they were picking up pieces of people's lives. Serving at a nursing home has made Dan Carter, a corps member in DC Service Corps, an avid believer in the daily miracles of service; he became one the moment that an elderly woman, who had sat expressionless and silent for days, finally smiled. As Leslie Bourne, the leadership trainer at the Los Angeles Conservation Corps puts it, "Corps members need to see that some people are hurting just like them."

Marketable job skills. Many corps are preparing their members for essential jobs in the environmental, human service, construction, and other marketable skill arenas. For example, none of the members of the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps crew sent out on the project of completely gutting and restoring a public lodge in the Allegheny mountains had any prior knowledge of the building trades. Yet after nearly a year of solid work, the lodge had new siding, new paneling, new flooring, new drywall, a new roof, and a new kitchen with newly-installed appliances. In their "spare time," the crew also installed a basketball court next to the building and built a ball field nearby. This is not, in the words of some

What's the Corps about? It's about energy, connecting young people's energy with the needs of our community through service and training that gives them the kind of skills and confidence to become productive citizens.

John Van De Kamp
Acting Chairman of the Board LACC, at Commission hearings, Los Angeles

critics of youth corps, "picking up chewing gum wrappers by the side of the road." Crew members learned about power tools, carpentry, electrical wiring, plumbing, and heavy equipment. "I don't know where else you could get a bunch of kids to do something like this," says George Corle, the crew supervisor, still a little stunned by the achievement. "I guarantee you these guys know more than someone who's gone through a carpentry course."

Learning similar skills are corps members at YouthBuild, a program spreading nationwide that's targeting high school dropouts and other urban youth from low-income families. YouthBuild corps members prepare for construction careers by alternating weeks of working full-time converting abandoned or run-down buildings into low-income housing with weeks spent in G.E.D. studies closely tied to construction know-how.

In another field, the California Conservation Corps Helitack crew trains advanced corps members to be a part of a firefighting air attack unit. After an eighteen month commitment, an average of 75 percent of the Helitack crew members get placed in fire fighting or forestry jobs.

Institutional collaboration. Some youth corps are forging productive links with other institutions. The East Bay Conservation Corps has matched five corps members with more than 125 middle school students in a program called Project YES (Youth Engaged in Service). In the first half of 1992 alone, YES corps members presented educational skits on urban conservation and recycling to at least 9,000 elementary and middle school students. During their afternoons, corps members led teams of junior high school students in community improvement projects and discussions on environmental issues. Researchers found that as a result of participating in YES clubs, middle school students have stronger interpersonal skills, attend school more often, are more facile at real-life problem solving, identify active strategies for preparing for careers, and have more positive perceptions of themselves than their peers.[2]

Going the other way, the East Bay Conservation Corps has recently made an arrangement with California State University in Hayward in which work-study students are paired off as mentors with corps members just starting college and teaching them college-survival skills.

Diversity. The board adopted a specific policy to encourage diversity of participation in all of its corps programs. This can be a particular challenge for some youth corps. A survey recently conducted by the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps indicates that overall, the corps are diverse racially: 38% of corps members are African American, 36% White, 20% Hispanic, 3% Asian-American, 2% Native American

Diversity is much more than the mixing of different races. It's everyone's responsibility to consider each other's ideas.

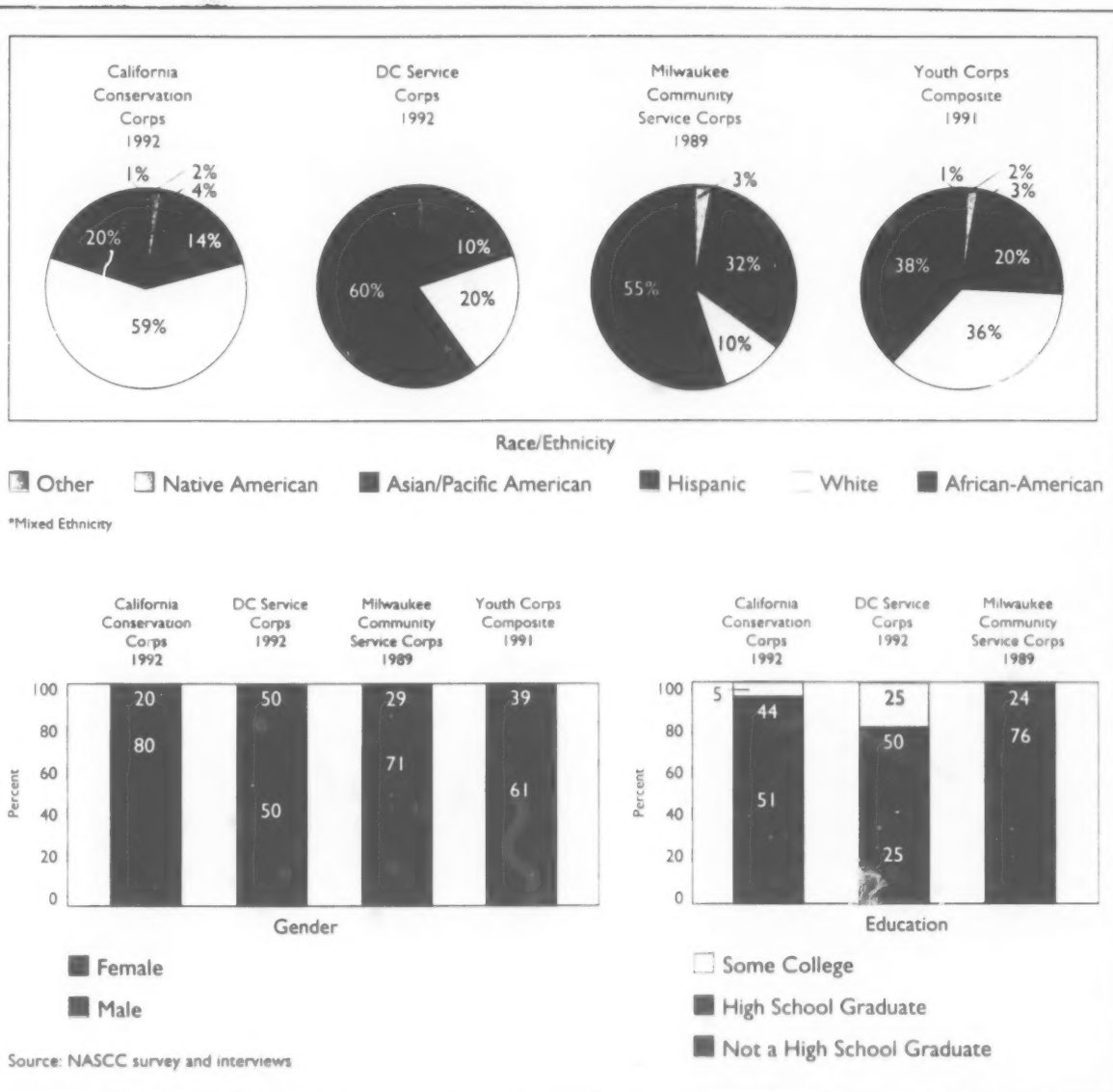
▼

Greg Ricks
Commission Senior Fellow

and 1% other. However, few individual corps are as diverse as these aggregate numbers suggest (see Chart 5.1). Many are in areas that are less diverse racially, and most are dependent on funds targeted at economically disadvantaged youth. Women are underrepresented in the majority of corps programs as well.

Chart 5.1

Youth Corps Composition by Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Education



Source: NASCC survey and interviews

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That said, some youth corps have worked very hard to give special emphasis to ethnic, economic, educational, and gender diversity, including Commission grantees Year Round Syracuse and the DC Service Corps. Their members include honor students and high school drop-outs, immigrants and American-born, privileged and disadvantaged, male and female —all working as equal team members.

Getting young people working together always creates challenges—but none that can't be met with creativity—as these deaf members of a service corps demonstrate every day.

The Minnesota Conservation Corps(MCC) has tackled another aspect of diversity by creating summer crews that combine young people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing. Through classes, work, games and friendships, every MCC corps member learns basic sign language and learns about the lifestyle of those who are hearing impaired. For corps members like John Mowrey, who is deaf, and who communicates both via sign language and lip-reading, his MCC summer four years ago was the first time he made friends with people who weren't deaf. "I learned," he says, "that they pretty much think the way we think, they just speak a different language." Proving that deaf people can be leaders, John returned for three consecutive summers as an MCC crew supervisor.

Also it is important to note that most corps overcome less visible social barriers between corps members. For example, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps puts Hispanics and blacks to work side by side, along with Crips and Bloods, English and Spanish speakers, Mexican Americans and Honduran Americans, Latinos and Latinas.

The key to quality: staff leadership. In almost every corps, the quality of supervision, training, and service-learning flows directly from the crew supervisors (or the equivalent; titles vary). They are the teachers, the coaches, the first sergeants, the chiefs, the surrogate parents. For many corps members, the crew supervisor is the first adult with whom they've ever had a mature two-way relationship.

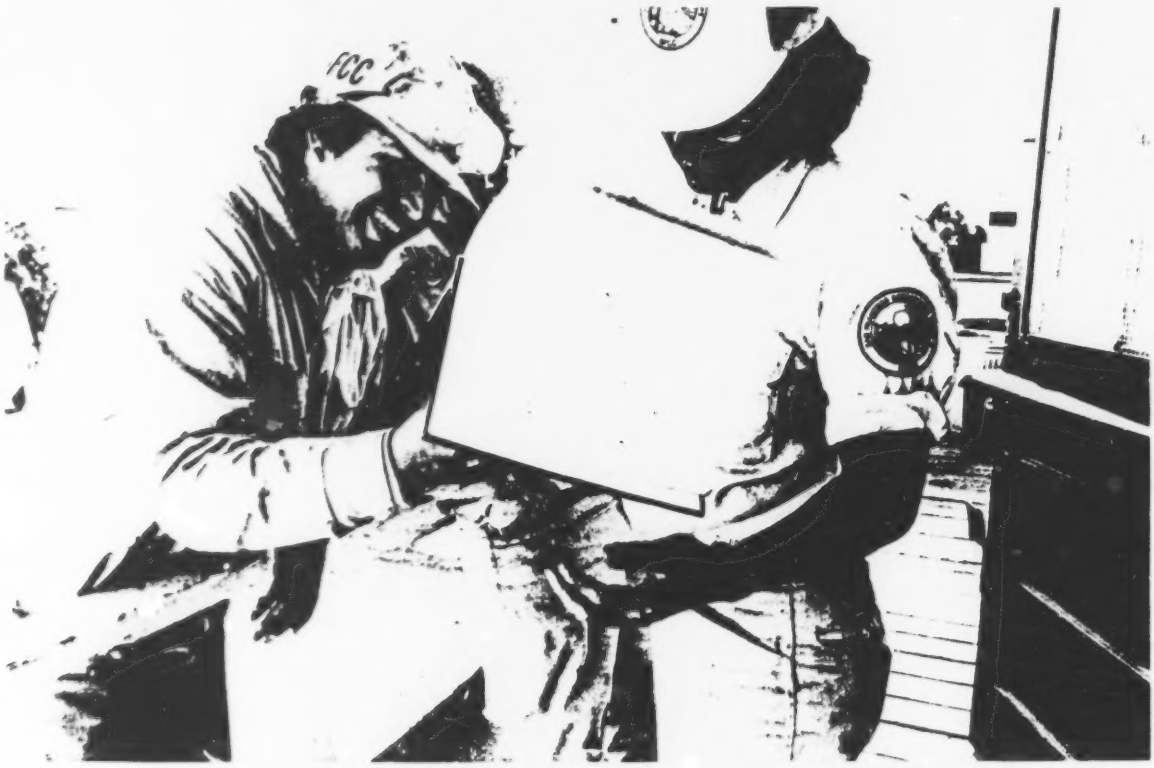
For example, Mike Prebeg, the leader of a ten-person Pennsylvania Conservation Corps crew, doesn't see his job as simply a matter of restoring the cabins at the Raccoon Creek State Park camp site. A Vietnam-era veteran with 18 years in the construction business under his toolbelt, Prebeg knows his job goes way beyond getting his corps members to put down new flooring, re-do the roofs, and assemble and grout stone fireplaces—although he's certainly doing that too. A single question from a visitor gets Prebeg rattling off details about the backgrounds of his various crew members. He knows where they're from, details on their family situations, what their vocational goals are. He knows what G.E.D or technical training course each of them is in away from the job—and he has arranged it so that all but one of them is in one. When he found out that his corps members weren't voters, he fixed that by taking the crew down to the Washington County courthouse for a tour and his own little registration drive.

Prebeg sums up his management style this way: "I don't stay on them every second. They won't learn anything if I don't give them space. The one thing I've taught them is that if they do something wrong, they have to make it right." Prebeg's a stickler for punctuality and work safety and has run people off who won't play by those rules, but on the other hand, when one of the corps members shows up a few days in a row without bringing a lunch, Prebeg notices. He sits down with the teenager and in short order finds out that there really isn't much food in his house and that his mother's been out running around somewhere for five days. Prebeg takes him out for a sandwich. Prebeg also brings the newspaper to the worksite every day, and at lunch he leads discussions about current events—and points out sales on work boots and food. He has the corps members maintain their own training records, and write-ups on everything they do. He incorporates selections from them into the regular progress reports he files with his superiors in Harrisburg. "The kids like that," he smiles.

A common theme among corps is that they feel they are underpaying their crew supervisors, resulting in considerable turnover. Typically, salaries are around $21,000 annually. Mike Prebeg works for $16,640 a year, with no health benefits, no paid holidays or paid vacations. He is hired from project to project. In a strong economy, he could be earning about $45,000 in steady work as a construction superintendent with a private company. Prebeg has worked at PCC for two years, which our preliminary

findings show is the average stay for a corps leader. With PCC's slim compensation package, if the construction business were doing better in western Pennsylvania, good people like Prebeg might move on. Those that do leave say that the corps' job instability and poor benefits are the primary reasons. Given that the crew leaders are where "the rubber meets the road" in youth corps, this is not a great place to skimp.

While crew supervisors are the keys to the corps members' experience, youth corps are equally dependent on their directors. These directors largely generate the work projects, the funding, and the in-kind donations



Working closely with a supervisor is one of the joys of the corps experience.

that keep many corps going—a never-ending challenge for these bare-bones operations. Directors establish the ethos and expectations that guide and motivate staff and corps members alike—everything from the way work is approached and corps members are dealt with to the reason learning is given such importance. And they deal with constant crises that would drive most business executives to despair.

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Despite the pressures of bare bones budgets, corps are achieving a lot. For instance, in fiscal year 1991-92, the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps built 25 bridges, improved 223 miles of trails, conserved 45 acres of wild ife habitat, preserved 200 feet of canal, and planted 5,093 trees. And in a cost-effective way: By comparing the cost of its projects to their estimated cost if done privately, the PCC calculates that every dollar it spends would require $1.76 in private payments.[3] A 1982 study evaluating the California Conservation Corps showed a similar result overall, and a $2.82 private equivalent for each dollar it spent on emergency work.[4]

Corps member leadership. The organization of youth corps work offers numerous opportunities for corps members to gain progressively greater experience in leadership tasks—everything from leading morning exercises to caring for the crew's tools, from organizing a work project to becoming an assistant crew leader, from facilitating crew meetings to designing recruitment strategies. The best corps do this systematically, like the armed forces do, and offer special leadership development training and coaching. This kind of opportunity is what got Willie Thornton where he is today.

Corps are achieving a lot. In 1991–92, the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps built 25 bridges, improved 223 miles of trails, conserved 45 acres of wildlife habitat, preserved 200 feet of canal, and planted 5,093 trees.

Critical Issues

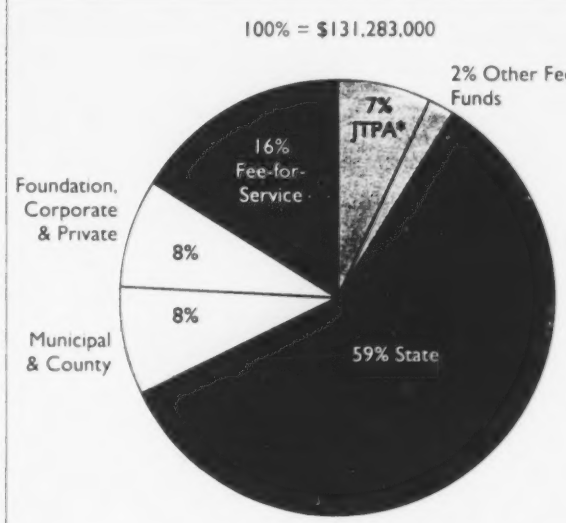
Two major issues that arise in connection with corps are finances and attrition.

Finances. The average cost per corps member per year appears to be about $15,000 to $20,000, although this cost ranges from $12,000 to $30,000. Full-year corps members generally receive about $10,000 in direct payments. Many corps pay their participants the minimum wage of $4.25 an hour ($150 to 200 per week) and offer little (perhaps $1,000) or no post service benefit. Others pay minimal stipends of $100 per week and provide post service benefits ranging up to $5,000, the maximum amount provided to participants under the National and Community Service Act.

The operating costs for corps—beyond the direct payments to corps members—vary widely, with most between $5000 and $10,000 per participant. It is important to spend enough in this area: Good training, education and counseling services as well as careful supervision are essential to good outcomes.

Chart 5.2

Sources of Funding for All Corps, FY 91



Source: NASCC

Note: $51M of the total is the California Conservation Corps, and the majority of its funds come from the state.

*JTPA = Job Training Partnership Act

The majority of corps receive most of their funds from state and local governments, either as direct budgetary support or as project fees (fees-for-service) in exchange for park cleanup and other services performed. A number of them also use Job Training Partnership Act funds. (See Chart 5.2.)

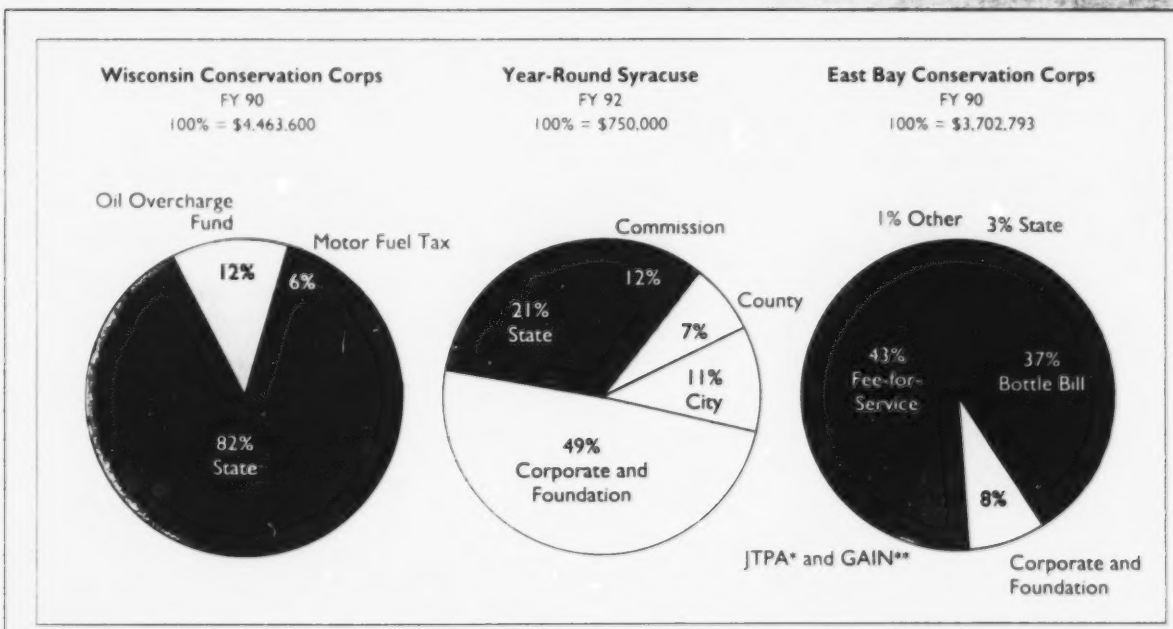
A few corps have developed a broader base of funding, including grants from private foundations, corporations, and individual citizens, but this is the exception. A few also benefit from earmarked public revenues. For example, under California's 1988 "bottle bill," the state reimburses bottlers for recycled bottles and cans but gives unredeemed deposit money to local youth conservation corps for their litter abatement and recycling efforts. In fiscal year 1990-91, 37% of the East Bay Conservation Corps budget came from the bottle bill. (See Chart 5.3.)

Under the leadership of VISTA, the San Francisco Conservation Corps successfully tapped Community Development Block Grant monies for projects like installing pathways accessible by wheelchairs and playground equipment in daycare centers. It obtained $50,000 from a city fund for home injury prevention to support corps members doing home improvement work for low income seniors. And what a wonderful way to get funding—the grab bar one corps member installed in an eighty-year-old woman's bathroom allowed her to bathe unattended for the first time in six years.

In total, the $22.5 million available to the Commission for youth corps amounts to about 14 percent of the total amount spent by all sources on corps in fiscal year 1992. Although the direct Commission appropriation remains unchanged for the fiscal year 1993, the Community Works Progress Act, an amendment to the Defense Authorization Act passed by Congress in 1992, may give the Commission responsibility for $40 mil-

Chart 5.3

Sources of Funding, Selected Youth Corps



*JTPA = Job Training Partnership Act
**GAIN = Greater Avenues for Independence

lion for a federally operated youth corps and other community service programs in localities affected by Defense Department downsizing. The Act also authorizes $44 million for National Guard youth programs.

While these programs may add important new opportunities, funding remains one of the most pressing issues relevant to youth corps. And money affects content. For one example, government funds, such as Job Training Partnership Act monies, are largely targeted at the disadvantaged and hence reliance on them may overthrow a corps' attempt to achieve the worthy goal of having a diverse group of participants. For another, corps can't really succeed with at-risk youth without educational and counseling components, which are not cheap. Nor is daycare, which is needed by corps hoping to attract and retain single mothers. And cash-strapped corps often have to forego human services projects in order to take on less instructive and less meaningful fee-for-service ones. For corps really trying to put America's youth back on track, every day is a budget struggle.

Attrition. This is one of the chronic problems of corps. The average length of stay in a full-year youth corps program is approximately seven months. Why do some corps members leave their programs early? Some corps members leave for an employment opportunity or enroll in a full-time vocational or academic program. Some others, however, discover early on that they can't hack the responsibilities of showing up for the daily 7:30 a.m. physical training exercises, of respecting their fellow corps members, or of putting in their fair share of the work. Some get bored—especially those who find little meaning or variety in their work. Some lead complicated personal lives brought on by dysfunctional families and substance abuse. Or in the absence of affordable day care, the responsibilities of single parenthood prove too much.

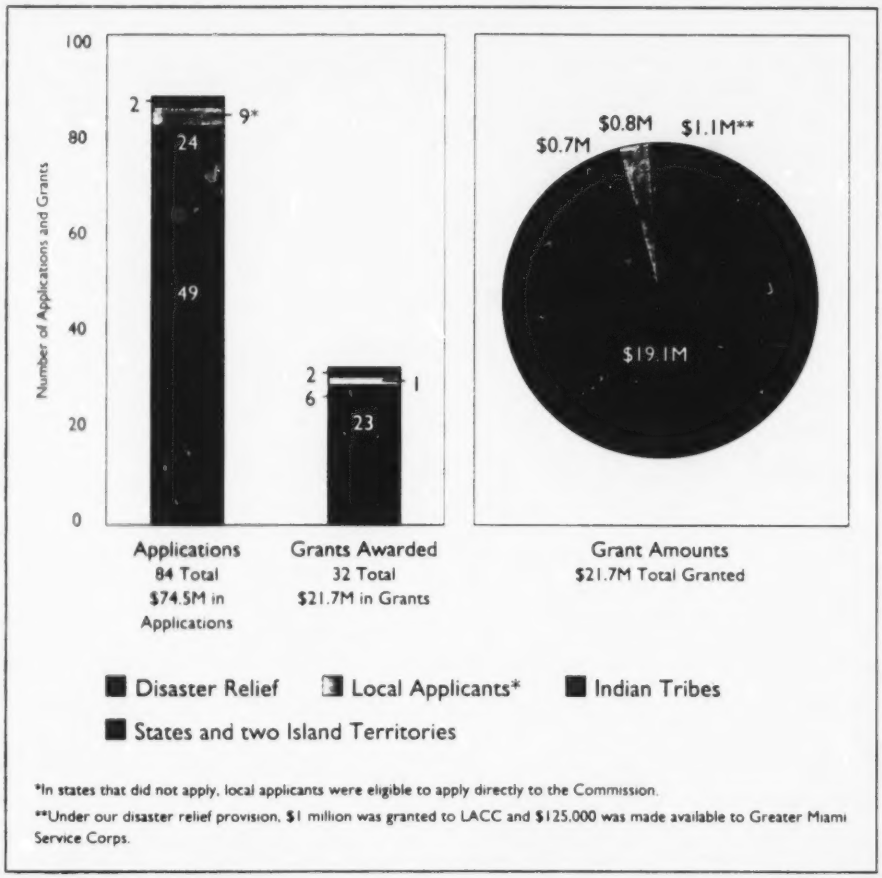
While some corps see nothing magical about corps members staying for the full year and in fact encourage their members to move on to educational and higher paying job opportunities should they come along, more find retention problematic, both for the personal development of members and for the program. A few youth corps try to reduce attrition by providing post-service benefits only to those completing the term of service: New York's CVC supplies a $5000 scholarship or $2500 cash alternative on completion only, and the California Conservation Corps gives an $800 scholarship only to members who finish.

The Commission's Role

Subtitle C of the National and Community Service Act charges the Commission with making grants to states, localities, and Indian tribes for the creation or expansion of year-round and summer youth corps, and Congress appropriated $22.5 million for this program in our first year. The Commission received 84 applications from states, local agencies, and Indian tribes requesting over $70 million. (See Chart 5.4.) We awarded grants to 24 states and localities, and six Indian tribes, and two special grants to local corps for disaster relief efforts. The states in turn are making sub-grants to various state and local corps. Since this process is not yet complete, we do not yet know how many corps and corps members will be reached by Commission funds; as of mid-December, 11 new corps had received start-up grants, and 18 established corps had received funds for expansion.

Chart 5.4

Youth Corps Applications and Grants, FY92



*In states that did not apply, local applicants were eligible to apply directly to the Commission.

**Under our disaster relief provision, $1 million was granted to LACC and $125,000 was made available to Greater Miami Service Corps.

There is some dispute about whether channeling funding through states is the best way to assist locally-based corps. We have heard testimony on both sides. The National and Community Service Act requires us to work through states. This approach encourages states to develop effective state-level strategies and collaborative alliances with local corps, and it minimizes the federal role; however, in the coming year we will be monitoring to see whether states are making needed progress in these respects.

Whose community are we serving? My people really don't have a community base. In politics, we're not accepted, we're not given the means to make a voice. And many of us, we don't even own the stores in our neighborhoods. So, are we going to end up being used as a cheap labor force?...As well as training people how to sweep and how to shovel and how to plant trees, teach them how to build their own business, how to get involved with politics, that's what I'm saying.

▼

Rich Chavez
Corps member, LACC,
at Commission hearings,
Los Angeles

Here are four examples of Commission grants:

- ***Youth corps expansion:*** In 30 days and with $350,000 of its $1.75 million grant, the state of Washington started up 12 new summer service teams linked with community and local governmental agencies. One of the summer teams, made up of eight Hispanic 15- to 18- year-olds, regularly visited farmworker camps on behalf of the SEA MAR Community Health Care Clinic to provide health services information. Because all but one of the team members were bilingual, they bridged the gap between Spanish speaking farmworkers and English speaking health care specialists. Formerly, the Clinic was only able to serve an average of 15-20 people a day. After the team went into action, that became 120-140 daily.
- ***Newly created corps:*** The Kickapoo Youth Conservation Corps in Kansas is a three-year pilot model started last fall with a $147,000 Commission grant. One of the corps' goals is to revitalize and preserve the relationship between economically disadvantaged Native American youth and the nation's elders. One way they intend to accomplish this is through their "cultural foods project" that will bring the elders and corps members together to plant, harvest, and prepare traditional foods in traditional ways. Additionally, the corps members will renovate a cultural ceremonies building, landscape a low-income housing site for seniors, and help design and construct an eighty acre tribal park.
- ***Federal disaster relief:*** Under its federal disaster relief provision, the Commission granted $1 million to the Los Angeles Conservation Corps after the L.A. riots. The funds are earmarked for three special projects addressing underlying tensions related to the disturbance. After Hurricane Andrew, the Commission made available up to $125,000 to the Greater Miami Service Corps to establish a new location and team to assist with the clean-up.[5]

The Commission places great emphasis on the evaluation of the corps programs that it has funded. We expect our evaluation contractor to appraise systematically the impacts that participation in corps programs have on the self-esteem, attitudes, and career plans of corps members, and to do further cost-benefit analyses of corps programs. We hope to learn about such issues as whether post-service benefits decrease attrition rates and increase educational attainment, and whether Commission grants not limited to low-income participants enable grantees to increase program diversity. We will also be studying the new corps start-ups to draw lessons

from their experience. Additionally, we will evaluate the impacts and lessons learned from programs with special objectives, such as the integration of American Indian cultural values and traditions into practices of tribal corps.

The Way Forward

Our observations of a number of youth corps during the past year lead us to believe that at their best, they produce real value for young people and their communities, though further evaluation will be needed to substantiate fully this conclusion and to identify key determinants of impact. At the same time, many corps could strengthen their programs by incorporating the best practices of each other.

Working hard in a corps can bring people together.

With this perspective in mind, the Commission suggests that the country pursue two major goals with respect to youth corps in the next few years:

*1. **Enable all established corps to achieve high quality in four key areas critical to ensuring meaningful service experiences for corps members:***

- ***Quality of assignments***: For corps members to develop the skills and orientation to work they will need to succeed in life, they must experience more than a steady diet of unskilled menial work.
- ***Service learning***: Active service learning efforts are essential for corps to be more than just a job, for corps to help their members grow into productive adults and responsible citizens.
- ***Preparation for post-service life***: Job and educational counseling and post-service placement are important in helping corps members make a successful transition to the next stage of their lives.
- ***Staff development***: Major staff development is needed not only to ensure effective leadership and coaching of current corps members, but also to support future expansion and to prepare people for senior jobs in the corps.

In addition, we intend to encourage corps to give more attention to developing the leadership abilities of corps members (especially through involving them in helping to run the corps themselves), to enter into cooperative relationships with schools and colleges, and to further increase the diversity of their participants.

The grants the Commission makes will reflect these priorities. In addition, in fiscal year 1993 we intend to provide money to about five "leader corps" with exemplary programs or program components so that they can serve as sources of expertise for other corps. Working with the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, we will link a number of new corps directors with experienced directors who will serve as mentors. And to the same end, we will support "circuit riders" with specific expertise who will be readily available to any corps director who seeks help.

2. Expand substantially the number of opportunities available for young people to serve in youth corps. Corps are one of the most promising tools this country has for reaching young people, especially the poor in the inner cities and in rural areas, and engaging them in hard, productive work at the same time they are learning skills and disciplines for the future. So the country does not just need better corps; we need more and better corps.

How would additional opportunities be generated? For one thing, most corps need to develop greater skills at fund-raising; this is one priority area for technical assistance. Beyond this, our impression from the first grant-making cycle is that most well-established corps could double in size within a few months while maintaining quality, if they had the resources. Had the Commission had twice its actual level of funding, we believe the additional funds could have been profitably used to further the expansion and improvement of existing youth corps and to ascertain more rapidly how best to enhance this valuable state and local experiment in community service.

Since youth corps would be one important element within any emerging national service effort, the following chapter—focused on national service—discusses the question of expansion more fully.

FOOTNOTES

1 Newton, Rae. "City Volunteers: The Status of Members of the City Volunteer Corps Two Years After Program Entrance." Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA, Fall 1992, pp. 18-19

2 Loesch-Griffin, Deborah, P.h.D. "Belonging and Succeeding: An Evaluation of Two Middle-School Programs for Inner City Minority Youth, End-Of-Year Report to Stuart Foundations, Turning Point, Inc., November 1991, p. 6

3 "Pennsylvania Conservation Corps, Fiscal Year 1991-92 Annual Report." Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Department of Labor & Industry, November 1, 1992, p.5

4 Pham, Trac, H., M.B.A. "Evaluating the Economic Impact of the California Conservation Corps." March 1983

5 An additional $500,000 was made available to the Greater Miami Service Corps in fiscal year 1993.

National Service: From Theory to Practice

Chapter 6

VISTA volunteers have for decades been providing critical assistance to poor families in both rural and urban America.

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For many years there has been a lively discussion about national and community service, but it has taken place mostly in the shadows. (Recall that we have defined "national service," as roughly a year or more of full-time service or its equivalent in part-time service over a longer period, stipended if necessary.) Debates about obligations to serve, rights, and compensation were spirited, but they took place in small retreat centers or in college dorm rooms. Books were written too, but the most likely place to find them was in policy paper footnotes. The only time "service" really made the front page was when it was part of a white collar criminal's sentence.

But the headlines are different now. "Which Way for National Service?" asks a recent *Boston Globe* article. "National Service Initiative Takes Shape" declares bold type across the top of a *Washington Post* piece. A big change came last September when presidential candidate Bill Clinton made a widely reported speech at Notre Dame, in which he called for the establishment of a National Service Trust Fund: "I have offered this plan to help young people go to college but I've also offered it because I want America to send a message that our society values and honors service....Americans from all backgrounds and every walk of life are waiting for a summons to service and citizenship, not just for young people who are going on to college but for young people in our high schools and people of all ages who want to do something for their communities and for their country."

Two other less conspicuous but important factors lie behind the new attention to national service. First, around the country, grassroots programs have started that are providing the foundation for a network of service opportunities. The diversity of these programs matches the diversity of our nation. While some are federally operated, like VISTA and the Peace Corps, the majority are "locally owned and operated" either by states or cities, nonprofit organizations or religious groups. Some, like the youth corps described in the previous chapter, focus on younger volunteers; others, like Teach For America, focus on college graduates; still others, like VISTA and the Peace Corps, have a number of older volunteers. Some are part-time intensive service programs like the Bonner Scholars or YVC programs described in previous chapters. Others require full-time

Conservation corps are one of the best places for a young woman to get hands-on training with heavy equipment and the responsibility that comes with it.

participation. Some, like YouthBuild, are targeted at disadvantaged youth, and others like the D.C. Service Corps seek diversity among the program participants.

Second, Subtitle D of the National and Community Service Act, whose leading proponents were Senators Barbara Mikulski, Sam Nunn, and Claiborne Pell, and Congressman Dave McCurdy, authorized funding of diverse national service models. Under Subtitle D, the Commission is funding eight tests of national service models, only one of which—the formerly privately funded City Year—was already in existence.

A national service network based on the foundation of diverse, decentralized programs would be quite different from a uniform, centralized, federally operated program along the lines of the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps. While the CCC met the needs of its time, today's situation calls for its own unique response—one that does not try to shoehorn the diverse needs of our communities and those interested in serving into a single program.

When can an expanded national service partnership effort be expected to show results? We have projects working for over one hundred and fifty youth throughout the state. We are finding from our research that those projects have paid back more than three times what they cost.

Bill Basl
Director
Washington (State) Service Corps, at Commission hearings, Los Angeles

For example, the newly created Delta Service Corps, a collaboration between the states of Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana, is placing individuals in community-based service organizations where they are addressing needs identified by the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission. This program has just begun, but if the excitement and energy generated by its initial activities is any indication, it could prove to be another useful example of how a national service network can bring together in a common endeavor people of diverse backgrounds and ages.

Commission-funded models like the Delta Corps will help test theories about what works and does not work, and—if successful—they will increase the diversity of program models available. However, they will not by themselves enable all participants to share in a common experience. This is why the Commission and its grantees have been working together to develop a training program to address participants' common needs.

National service is quickly moving from theory to practice. But since America has never tried to do anything quite like this before, some of the classic questions about national service remain to be answered. These include:

1. Why national service?
2. Who would serve?
3. In what kind of programs would people serve?
4. What work would they do?
5. Should service be mandatory or voluntary?
6. Should full-time participants receive stipends?
7. How would national service be funded?

What is new is that we can seek answers to some of these questions from actual experience in the field, and not from abstract theories. In the sections that follow, we will summarize what we have learned so far about the programs already in existence, how the Commission is using its funds to test new models, and how our early experiences have influenced our thinking about the major questions to be answered and the steps that must be taken if national service is to move further from theory to practice.

Current Situation

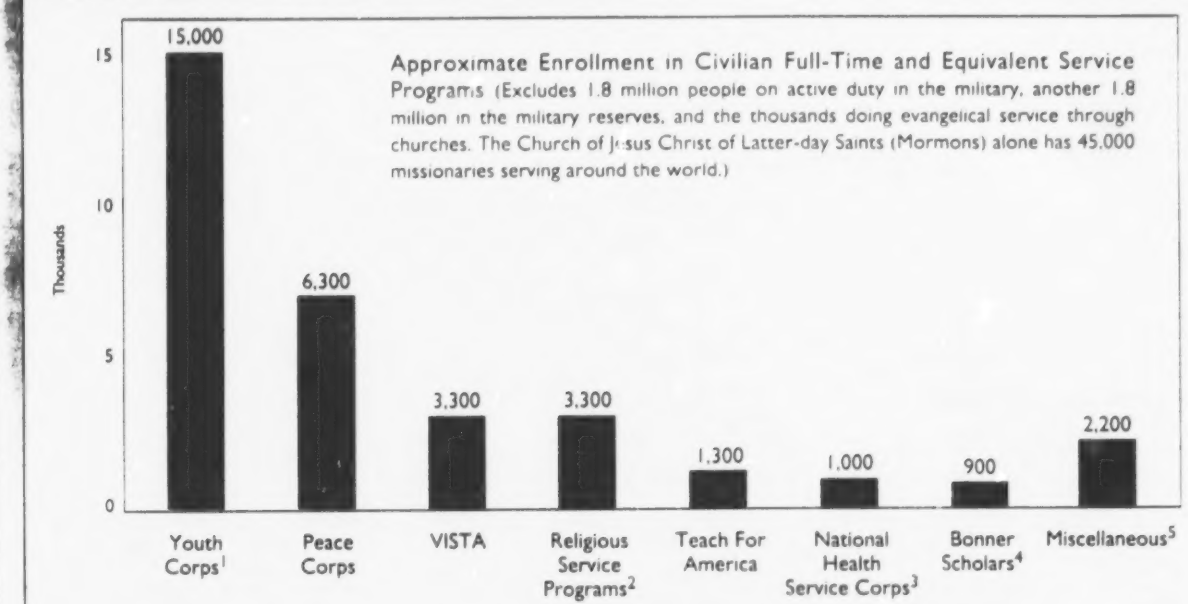
Although the United States lacks a formal network of national service opportunities, it does have a surprising number of people participating in programs that could become part of national service. We estimate that more than 30,000 people are involved in intensive civilian service, only

about half of them in the youth corps discussed in Chapter 5. Chart 6.1 indicates the major programs in which those 30,000-plus are serving.

The programs in which these people serve are extremely diverse. Some are designed primarily for high school dropouts and graduates, others for college students and graduates, still others for professional school students

Chart 6.1

Major Program Enrollment, 1992



Source: Interviews, team analysis

[1] Includes YouthBuild, and part-time year-round corps such as YVC, CVC, and East Bay Conservation Corps.

[2] Extrapolated from International Liaison of Lay Volunteers in Mission data. Excludes service that is primarily evangelical in nature.

[3] Numbers currently in the field through various programs.

[4] Part-time participants serving for three years. Equals 300 full-time equivalents.

[5] Programs with fewer than 200 participants. Extrapolation based on enrollment in several international service corps, fellowship programs, and placement programs like Public Allies and other teacher corps.

and graduates or older volunteers. Second, the character of service experience varies greatly in terms of the degree of structured activities and group interaction. In some programs, which we will call "team" models, the bulk of the service is done through structured teams with a high level of supervision and cooperation. In others, which we will call "individual place-

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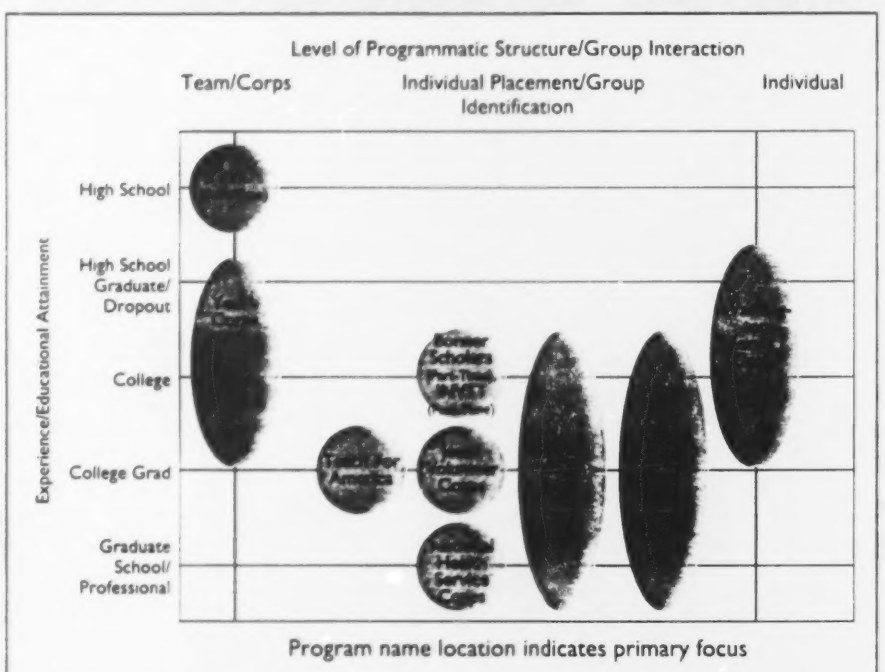
ment/group identification" models, the servers are placed in individual assignments, but there is some level of group interaction and central coordination. The Delta Service Corps is an example of this type of program. In the least structured models, which we will refer to as "individual placement" models, the servers find their own placements with non-profits or government agencies, and there is little or no group interaction, central coordination or supervision.

Chart 6.2

Existing Program Models



Source: interviews, team analysis

Chart 6.2 maps a number of existing service programs onto these dimensions. We look at this chart not only as a map of what is, but also as a suggestion of some of the additional terrain that could be explored in the next few years. The sections that follow will look at the three different types of program structure, and then conclude with a look at their costs.

Team Models

Most of the established examples of team programs are targeted principally at high school graduates and dropouts. For example, most of the youth service and conservation corps discussed in the previous chapter fit this model as do year round part-time corps such as YVC. The corps members work together clearing trails, rehabilitating structures, working with schoolchildren. They frequently cooperate in learning new skills and in reflecting on their experience, and they do a good deal of group problem-solving.

Based on what we've learned so far, it appears that teamwork is especially effective for forging strong bonds of understanding between people of diverse backgrounds and for developing the kinds of cooperative skills

that are so important in the modern economy. It also lends itself to the kind of leadership development approach that the military has refined, in which people can progressively assume more responsibility. In addition, an internal structure based on team leadership and team discipline enables a program to make valuable work contributions without much external supervision—e.g., by park departments or nursing homes.

Individual Placement/Group Identification Models

Most of the individual placement/group identification models we studied are targeted principally, though not solely, at college graduates or older servers. There appear to be more than 15,000 people serving in programs of this sort. They are serving in federally operated programs (for example, VISTA, Peace Corps, and the National Health Service Corps) as well as non-federal ones (like the mostly privately-financed urban teaching corps called Teach For America, or the Jesuit Volunteer Corps).

Teach For America is putting young teachers in underserved schools.

The programs in the individual placement/group identification category are an eclectic lot. Some programs like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps provide for extensive group interaction while others like VISTA rely more heavily on the agencies where the servers are assigned. Some models like Teach for America are targeted at particular social problems, while others like Public Allies place servers in all kinds of non-profit organizations, but bring them together for group reflection. There are also models focusing more heavily on those with professional degrees, such as the National Health Service Corps, with about 1,000 graduate M.D.s and other medical practitioners working in underserved areas in exchange for payment of medical school costs. Finally some, such as the Bonner Scholars program and INVST, both discussed in Chapter 4, are part-time intensive models. Others, such as Echoing Green Fellowships, enable college and professional school graduates to take entrepreneur-like initiative in creating new programs.

Models that take a structured approach to placement and group interaction have several advantages. A program can handle recruitment, selection and placement, reducing the cost and risks of poor placement for both the volunteers and the organizations in which they are placed. In addition, all of these models provide initial training, and at least some group context that can foster reflection on the work the servers have done. Although no detailed studies have addressed the importance of group interaction to the overall success of volunteer programs, some in the field see this interaction as a key element in making service a transforming experience.

Individual Placement Models

Volunteers often find their own placements and participate in little or no group interaction—other than what they generate on their own within their sponsoring agency or community. And this is a model that has often been proposed in discussions of national service—for example, in William F. Buckley Jr.'s book, *Gratitude*.

The Washington (State) Service Corps provides an example of an existing program that falls somewhere between a pure individual placement model and one that incorporates some group identification components. It identifies qualifying placements and helps broker assignments but does not provide any group activities (though it may do so in the future).

Individual placement models allow maximum flexibility for individuals and organizations. They are most suited for highly motivated, experienced servers who need little guidance. Because of their unstructured nature, however, special efforts would be needed to ensure that all volunteers end up doing productive service.

Costs

There are three main types of cost: the stipend or salary paid to the server; the post-service benefit paid to the server; and the operating costs, which include recruitment, placement, supervision, materials and supplies, evaluation, training and education, counseling, and central administration. The corps tend to have the highest operating costs while the individual models have little or no operating cost. The programs also differ significantly in terms of who pays these costs. In some, the costs are mostly borne by the program itself, while in others the organization where the volunteer serves picks up a significant share of the cost, usually in the form of a salary and/or room and board for the server.

Some participants are also supported by the deferment or cancellation of federal student loans. For example, under the new Perkins Loan Cancellation Program, students can earn loan forgiveness if they serve as teachers, nurses, Peace Corps or VISTA volunteers, or as "a full-time employee of a public or nonprofit child or family service agency who is providing...services to high-risk children who are from low income communities and the families of such children." During the first two years of service 15% of the loan is forgiven annually, 20% is forgiven in the third and fourth years, and the remaining 50% is forgiven the fifth year. Only two percent of those eligible for Perkins loan forgiveness took advantage of this option last year.[1] This is a function of both a lack of publicity and the program's newness.

Chart 6.3 summarizes differences in cost per participant for some of the various programs described above, while Chart 6.4 provides a frame of reference for evaluating these costs by comparing them to those of other activities supported by the government (see next two pages for these charts). Note that at $20,000 per person per year, the average cost of youth corps is roughly equal to that of the Job Corps, or to pick a very different example, of federal imprisonment. Universities on average spend $23,000 per full-time student, and the average cost of supporting a first term enlisted person in the military (including salary, training, etc.) is about $41,000.

The Commission's Role

Subtitle D of the Act charges the Commission with making grants to states or Indian tribes for "the creation of full- and part-time national and community service programs" that will "serve as...effective model(s) for a large-scale national service program." Congress appropriated $22.5 million to fund such grants (and related activities, such as training and evaluation) during fiscal year 1992. The Act permits the Commission to fund only those programs that "are geographically diverse and include programs in both urban and rural states," including some that "enroll individuals who have completed undergraduate education or specialized post-secondary training...." It authorizes programs for full-time, part-time (i.e., that average nine hours per week), and senior (age 60 or older) participants, and requires at least 25 percent of programs to include all three. It provides poverty-level stipends for full-time participants (up to $8,880 in 1992) and $5,000 post-service educational benefits after a year of service ($6,000 after three years for part-time participants). States pay half of the cost of the post-service benefits.

In order to ensure the maximum scope for creativity, the Commission did not specify any particular kinds of models that it was seeking, but simply invited states and tribes to put forward their best ideas. In March the

Chart 6.3

Estimated Annual Costs per Year of Service

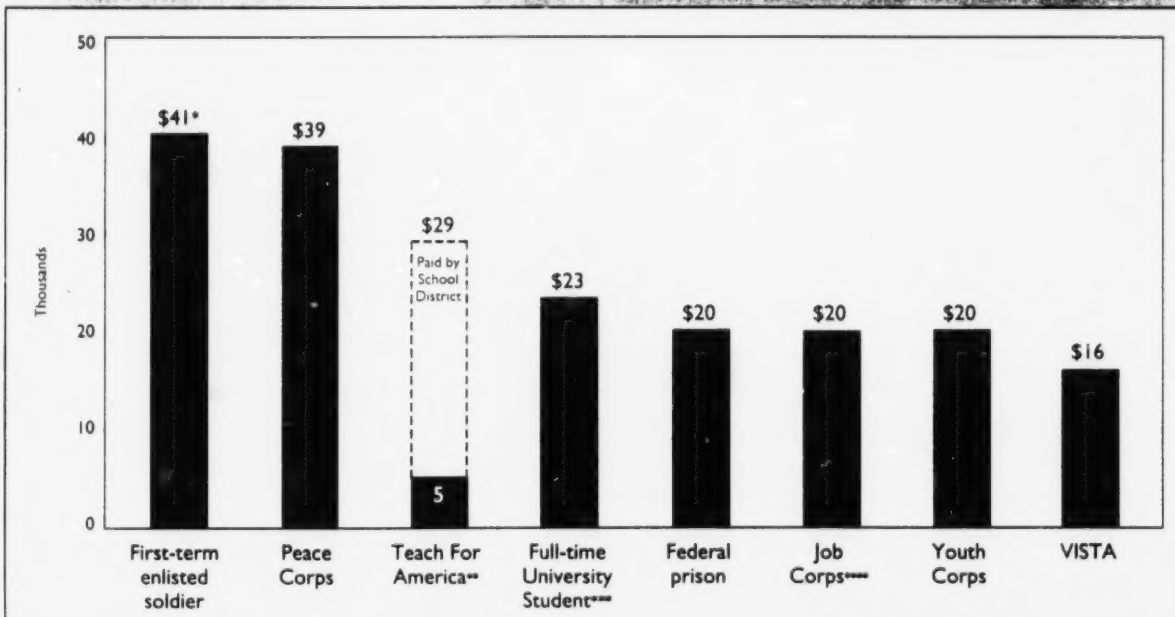
Program	Youth Corps	Teach For America	VISTA	Peace Corps	Jesuit Volunteer Corps	National Health Service Corps
Stipend	Between $100 weekly ($5,000 annually) and the minimum wage of $4.25 an hour ($8,800 annually).	Paid by schools where servers are assigned. Varies between $18,000 and $30,000 depending on average starting salary at school.	Subsistence allowance equal to 105% of the poverty index for a single individual, adjusted to reflect cost of living. Average of $7,300 a year plus health insurance costing about $1,500 annually.	Annual stipend to cover the cost of living in the assigned country. On average, about $280 per month or $3,360 annually.	Sponsoring organization pays all costs. Average of $5,700–$7,000 includes $70 for food and $85 stipend per month plus insurance and housing in group home with other JVCs, which reduces cost.	Paid by clinics where doctors work.
Postservice Benefit	Between nothing and $5,000 per year. Programs that pay more in stipend tend to pay less in postservice benefit.	None, except those eligible for Perkins Loan Cancellation and deferment of other student loans.	End-of-service bonus of $95 a month for each month of service, or $1,140 annually. Also Perkins Loan Cancellations and deferment of other student loans.	$200 end-of-service bonus for every month spent abroad. $5,400 is the norm for a two-year tour. Also Perkins Loan Cancellations and deferment of other student loans.	None, except about 50% receive loan deferment.	The corps has two programs, one which pays for all medical school costs and one that pays for loans. On average, a benefit of $30,000 for each year of service.
Program Costs per Participant	Between $5,000 and $20,000. Most programs believe that $10,000 would allow for sufficient quality.	$5,000 per server, on average.	ACTION estimates staff support costs for VISTA to be around $3,500 per participant, but the incremental cost for new VISTAs is much lower. Other support costs (recruitment, training, etc.) bring the total to around $6,000 per VISTA.	Estimate direct support costs to be $19,000 per volunteer year and central administration costs (recruitment, screening, administration) to be $13,500.	Average cost of $3,000 per volunteer, but sponsoring agency pays about $1,300 of this cost, on average. This covers several retreats, site visits, placement activities, and general administration.	Estimated to be $3,000 per participant.
Average Cost for a Full Year of Service	The total cost per participant for a year of service averages out to around $20,000 annually, excluding health insurance.	The total cost per participant varies between $23,000 and $35,000, but the cost to the program is only $5,000 per participant on average.	Around $16,000 per year.	Average annual cost is $39,000. But incremental cost for a new Peace Corps volunteer in an existing site would be $9,000.	The average cost for a year of service ranges between $8,7000 and $10,700. JVC only pays $1,700 of this cost, on average. Rest paid by organization where volunteer is placed.	For each year of service, about $33,000 exclusive of salaries that the participants receive. (Over $100,000 including salary.)

Commission received 34 applications for these grants, totaling $85 million. In June it selected eight programs to be tested, seeking high-quality applications that would test a variety of different answers to the seven questions set out earlier. The paragraphs below characterize each of the eight briefly, and Chart 6.5 on the next page summarizes some of the important differences among them.

Civic responsibility model: City Year (Massachusetts), mentioned earlier in this report, is an urban youth corps in Boston. In this program, the participants work, in teams of 10, in a wide range of areas: housing and homelessness, education, youth leadership, environmental matters, and community development, all in one city. The program emphasizes

Chart 6.4

Estimated Average Annual Costs per Participant



Sources: Compensation Directorate; Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense; Peace Corps interview; Teach For America Annual Report; Digest of Education Statistics, 1992, Chart 333; Federal Bureau of Prisons interview; *Job Corps in Brief*, U.S. DOL, Program Year 1990, p. 16; Youth Corps and VISTA interviews.

*Does not include overhead, recruiting, etc. $16,214 for tax-adjusted Basic Military Compensation, $22,000 for basic training costs, $1,800 for uniforms and travel costs, and $1,265 for medical care. Represents average of all first-term DOD enlisted personnel.

**Assumes average salary of $24,000 paid by school. $5,000 is operating cost for Teach For America.

***Current-fund expenditure per full-time equivalent student in four-year year universities, 1989-90.

****1990 Cost per slot, student service year.

strengthening the civic awareness of its members and stimulating civic service throughout the community.

City Year has an extremely diverse group of participants—ethnically, educationally, and economically. And those participants have a very high completion rate of their nine-month stint of service (86% in 1991-92). A large share of past participants has gone on to college, and another substantial group of them has moved into leadership positions in community service—at City Year and elsewhere. City Year grew to 100 corps members entirely on the basis of private contributions.

The Commission funded City Year principally to test whether this model can retain its quality and innovation as it uses federal funds to expand to a much larger scale: 220 participants in 1992-93 and 500 in

Chart 6.5

Subtitle D Grantees

Program	City Year (Mass.)	Georgia Peach Corps	Delta Service Corps	Pennsylvania Service Corps	Volunteer Maryland!	New Jersey Urban Schools Service Corps	Oklahoma Health Care Volunteers	Seneca Nation Language Link (New York)
Model	Civic development	Community development	Community development	Leadership development	Volunteer generator	School improvement	Career development	Language and cultural revitalization
Participants 1992–93	220	120	275	325	140	0 (1992-93); Planning only in 1992-93 300 (1993-94)	20	6
Full time	100%	100%	55%	38%	25%	50%	100%	100%
Age/ Education	Mostly high school grads., dropouts	Mostly high school grads., ≤20% seniors	Mostly high school grads., dropout but diverse, ≤25% seniors	Mostly college grads., many working adults, ≤15% seniors	Mostly working adults, very intergenera-tional	Community adults, college grads., and dropouts, some seniors	All AFDC recipients (young single mothers)	Mostly high school grads.
Key Character-istics	Urban, team-based corps	Rural, team-based corps	Rural individual placement/ group identification	Urban individual placement/ group identification	Statewide, team-based placements	Urban, team-based placements	Individual with mentor	Rural, individual placement/ group identification
Lead Organiza-tion	Private Nonprofit	State Dept of Community Affairs	State Division of Volunteerism	Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities	Governor's Office of Volunteerism	State Dept. of Higher Education	State Dept. of Human Services	Seneca Tribal Government

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1993-94. In addition, we want to observe what impact an expanded City Year can have on Boston as a whole.

Community development model (team-based): The Georgia Peach Corps is a rural, intergenerational corps that will reinforce Vidalia and Toombs counties' efforts to implement the Governor's All-Star Community Betterment plans . There will be 60 full-time participants in each community, 50 young adults and 10 senior citizens over 60. The Peach Corps participants will work in teams, rotating every few months from public works to education to human service projects. These projects will be identified, developed and supervised by advisory task forces in each county.

Georgia's rural, team-based model will enable useful comparisons with City-Year's urban, team-based model, and with Delta Service Corps' rural, individual placement/group identification model. The first question to be answered by the Peach Corps is what kinds of team-based work will prove most productive in rural settings. As with City Year, we also want to learn whether such a corps operating at scale can promote wider citizen involvement.

Community development model (individual placement/group identification): Delta Service Corps (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi), as described at the beginning of this chapter, will place participants in local service organizations dealing with education, public safety, environment, or other human services, following up on needs identified by the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission. A full-time area team leader will coordinate the activities of three- to five-person teams in two or three neighboring counties. Each team will have a mix of full-time, part-time and senior-citizen participants who will meet biweekly in order to coordinate their efforts and to share lessons learned. In the course of the participants' year of service, they will together carry out a "signature project" that draws on the resources of the agencies in which they work. This model will help us learn whether individual volunteers can substantially extend the impact of local service organizations while gaining reinforcement from participation in group activities.

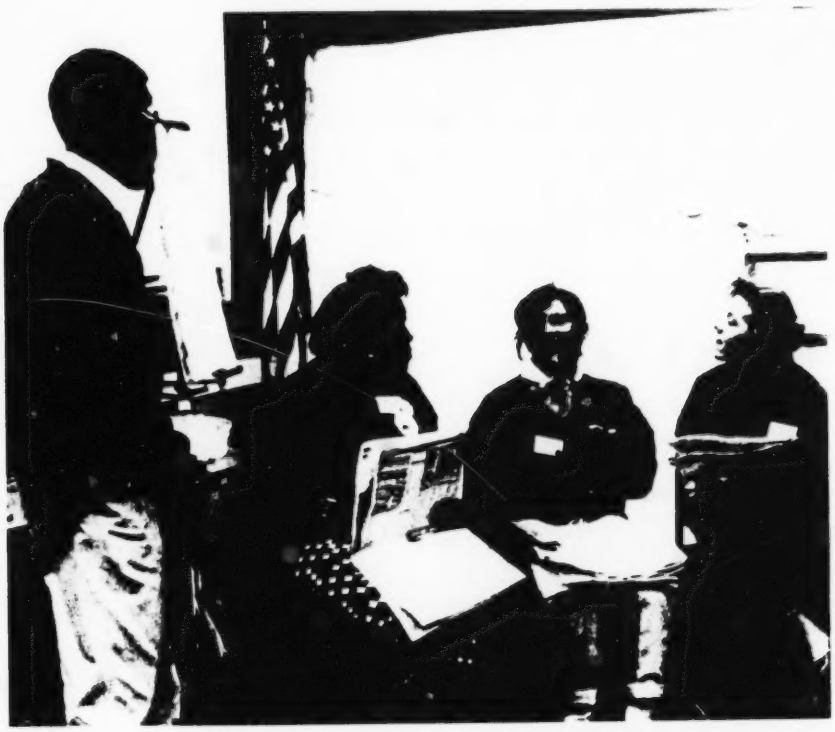
Leadership leveraging/leadership development model: The Pennsylvania Service Corps will place participants as community service leaders in other organizations—e.g. as staff members of service learning programs in schools and community agencies, crew leaders in innovative youth corps programs, and as "green deans" (coordinators of community service) on college campuses. We hope to learn whether the PSC volunteers can successfully stimulate the development of community service programs in the organizations to which they are assigned, and whether a corps will enable the service network in Pennsylvania to develop rapidly and effectively.

Being involved in City Year is transforming my employees....They come there, and working side by side, with no titles, are transforming, in a day, a field full of rocks and rubble into a garden that will feed hungry children. Then they take this and go back to their jobs with a new understanding of the potential of working together.

Jeff Schwartz
Chief Operating Officer
Timberland

Over time, we also hope to learn what share of PSC volunteers pursue careers as service leaders.

A majority of the participants in the PSC will be part-time, including a substantial number of senior citizens; many will have teaching backgrounds. Most of the full-time participants will be high school graduates with leadership potential, but some will be college graduates or "stopouts."



Team planning sessions, such as this one at Commission grantee Delta Service Corps, is a key part of any national service program.

The PSC has, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU), undertaken an innovative "university in dispersion" under which corps members will receive three full weeks of training and guided service learning workshops—at the beginning of service, in the middle, and at the end—as well as monthly two-day sessions on weekends. Institutions affiliated with PACU will grant college credits for successful completion of this program.

Volunteer generator model: Volunteer Maryland! is a distinctive model in a number of ways. It intends to help public, non-profit, and community-based organizations generate and more effectively use many more volunteers than in the past. Seventy-five percent of the participants will be part-time, and there will be an unusually wide age and socioeconomic spread. Typically, a team of one full-timer and three part-timers will be assigned to a local organization, not to provide direct service of the sort found in City Year, the Georgia Peach Corps or the Delta Service Corps but to enlist, train, organize, and place volunteers from the community. The full-timer will provide team leadership and coordination and the part-timers—who will serve for three years—will provide continuity with the organization. Each team will have a goal of generating up to 200 volunteers for work in such areas as youth development (literacy tutoring, mentoring, after-school care and safe-havens), health care (preventive education, nutrition), family services (counseling, drug abuse prevention), and environmental protection (con-

servation, wildlife protection, restoration projects). In making this grant, the Commission is testing Maryland's hypothesis that there will be a substantial increase in volunteers if citizens have a good volunteer experience, and that many more organizations will use volunteers well if they learn how.

Institutional development model (schools): The Urban School Service Corps (New Jersey) offers an opportunity to test the potential impact of national service in helping to change and strengthen a key public institution—schools. Teams of 20 corps members—10 full-time and 10 part-time—will be assigned to some of New Jersey's poorest inner city schools to supplement Comer School Development efforts, a major educational reform program in the state that addresses both the educational needs in the school and the related needs of students and their families. The teams will be composed of adults living near the schools—parents and other community residents, some of whom will be senior citizens—as well as nearby college students and recent graduates. Some team members will work in the classroom, others will coordinate after-school activities and safe haven projects, and still others will provide counseling and other needed human services for children and their families.

Career development model: Health Care Volunteers (Oklahoma) enables welfare recipients, mostly single mothers, to be placed in public, private and Indian health care centers, assisting in the delivery of critically needed services such as pre- and post-natal counseling and nutrition education. Each will be paired with a health care professional mentor, who will help her develop job and life skills as well as a service orientation. During the program, participants will receive remedial math and science training, if needed, and on completion the State Regents for Higher Education will cover the costs of further professional training in Oklahoma institutions of higher education by providing a post-service tuition credit. The Oklahoma grant will help determine whether national service can provide welfare recipients with a bridge into promising health care careers.

Language and cultural revitalization model: Language Link (Seneca Nation) is a unique program that may have wider application to other ethnic communities also in danger of losing their native language or culture. As Seneca elders die, few tribal members remain who speak the Seneca language or retain its cultural traditions. Through Language Link, the tribe will assign each of six young Senecas to a different elder. The young adults will spend 30 hours a week assisting the elders with health and domestic needs while learning the Seneca language enough to talk about tribal history and traditions. The young adults will record at least an hour of these conversations every day, and will use their journals to

Adopting a large-scale, broadly inclusive program of national service is one of the few proposals on the public policy agenda today that could markedly change the American way of life as we know it.

Williamson Evers
Visiting scholar at the
Hoover Institution

build a cultural resource library. This model will test whether national service volunteers can help preserve and revitalize a tribal culture.

To ensure that these experiments yield as much new knowledge as possible, the Commission has retained an evaluation contractor to conduct in-depth program evaluations on each one of the eight models. In particular we hope to learn who will be attracted to serve in each kind of program and what types of program structures have the greatest positive impact on the servers and the communities where the service is performed. Furthermore, we will gain insight into the advantages and disadvantages of the stipend, post-service benefit and funding requirements stipulated by Congress for Subtitle C and D grantees. Thus, these Commission-supported models will help shift the discussion of national service further from theory to practice.

"National service should be allowed to grow organically, from many different seeds in many different soils. We have to come to the problem not as engineers but as patient gardeners, prepared to let a thousand flowers bloom, examining each blossom—and weed—and keeping an eye open for unexpected buds and shoots. We have to give experience a chance."

Franklin Thomas
President
Ford Foundation

The Way Forward

Where do we go from here? On the one hand, several years of additional experimentation would generate additional knowledge about the impacts of the programs in operation and the keys to their success or difficulties. On the other hand, many are calling for an early expansion of national service, and such an expansion could yield major benefits for the country now.

Others in the Administration and Congress will ultimately decide how high a priority to assign to national service and what level of funds to commit to its expansion. In terms of the Commission's responsibilities, the two main issues are: Are the answers to key questions clear enough to provide a sound basis for expansion? And could substantial expansion be managed successfully?

Answering Key Questions

Reaching a judgment about such issues is never absolutely clear-cut or definitive, but based on our experience to date, it is possible to provide preliminary answers to each of the seven questions asked above. Answers that could be helpful in planning an expansion of national service, and in defining areas in which further information and experimentation is needed.

1. ***Why national service?*** This question is at the heart of much controversy over national service. Is it primarily a means of addressing unmet social needs? Is it mainly aimed at personal development of the participants—shaping the character, self-confidence, and civic responsibility of young adults through a "rite of passage," and building skills and employability? Is it principally intended to break down the social and economic

barriers that divide us as a society by bringing diverse participants together on the common ground of service to others?

It appears that in the best existing programs, the answer is "all of the above." This should not be a surprise; after all, the military has demonstrated conclusively that a single institution can serve multiple purposes such as these very well. So what's most desirable is a fruitful combination of these goals that will end up rebuilding our nation and our communities, not of a program focused narrowly on any one or two of them.

The best service programs guarantee at least one thing: a hard day's work.

And we would add a fourth overarching purpose: providing a means to draw volunteers together in service from all parts of the community, thus knitting the community together and reinforcing the work of more organizations in tackling critical social problems than would otherwise be possible.

While advocating a combination of "all of the above," there is much to learn about the best ways to serve each of these four purposes. Since our national service models are taking a variety of approaches to each of them, we will be observing closely to draw lessons as rapidly as we can.

2. ***Who would serve?*** Almost all proponents of national service believe it should represent a cross-section of the American public in terms of ethnicity, economic level, gender, and the like. But there is an important

debate about whether it should span the age spectrum or concentrate on young people, and even some of those who agree to focus on the young disagree about whether this means college graduates or recent high school graduates and dropouts.

In our view, the initial expansion of national service should focus mainly on youth—in and out of school—because their service would come at a formative time and thus shape their values and attitudes throughout life. National service should not, however, be exclusively for young people. Older adults have much to contribute and are already contributing in many programs around the country. In fact, intergenerational programs—as well as programs that are diverse in other ways—yield important community-building benefits. (Our Delta, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Seneca Nation grantees are all testing intergenerational program models, and most of our models are working on ethnic and economic diversity.)

Service teams aren't born; they're built—in training retreats like this one.

3. ***In what kind of program would people serve?*** Some have advocated a federally operated service effort along the lines of the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps. But a network of diverse, locally-based programs, building on the strengths that already exist, might respond to America's great variety of needs and circumstances and to the variety of capabilities and interests of prospective volunteers better than a single federal program. It would also create a sense of ownership of national service where the service was occurring, and would build on the strengths of the country's many pre-existing service organizations, while encouraging entrepreneur-like initiative to create new ones. Competition among local service organizations for volunteers and funds could stimulate a rapid rate of learning, innovation, and improvement as well as community pride. The challenge for Congress is not to pick a single program model, but to devise a way of ensuring that programs emerge to respond to many needs and volunteers of widely varying background and interest, and that the best programs grow and spread while the worse ones improve or disappear.

Such a diverse network could include federally-operated programs as well as locally owned and operated ones. VISTA and the Peace Corps could be part of this network and a new CCC and the National Guard Youth Corps, authorized by recently passed legislation, could also. In addition, we would encourage other federal agencies to consider whether youth service corps or other national service programs could help them carry out their missions more effectively.

Four aspects of program design warrant specific mention:

- ***Leverage models:*** National service volunteers may be able to provide the ideas and resources to greatly strengthen other service activities. They can serve as resources and organizers in the schools, in university programs, in summer programs and even in adult service programs. If such experiments as those in Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania prove successful, then we would recommend that programs based on such "leverage models" receive priority emphasis.
- ***Diversity of participants:*** If one major purpose of national service is to build strong bonds of community among people of differing backgrounds, then the country ought to encourage individual programs to recruit people of diverse backgrounds and experiment with ways to make such diversity work. Whenever possible, rich and poor, able-bodied and disabled, black and white, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, and Hispanics should be working together. But since this is not feasible for every program, maximal diversity should not be an inflexible rule.
- ***Team and individual placement/group identification models:*** At this point in the country's history, building community strikes many as especially important, and bringing people of diverse backgrounds together in common service and shared learning contributes to that end. In addition, because team and group programs take a structured approach to defining productive assignments and providing needed supervision for volunteers, there may be less risk that their assignments will result in a low-quality service experience. For these reasons, most national service opportunities are in programs that provide some group context and structure.

  However, individual placement models have some important advantages, so considerable experimentation would be useful in order to learn how best to ensure worthwhile service . Even for those that are found to work well, the creation of shared special projects and reflection seminars that involve other volunteers might be worthwhile.

- ***Full-time and part-time:*** While full-time service has received primary emphasis in most discussions of national service, part-time opportunities would enable people to serve who are not be able to make full-time commitments, and part-time service also opens possibilities for valuable programs linking education with service—e.g., the last year or two of high school connected with youth corps service, or part-time and summer service undertaken throughout college. Part-time models meet the needs of retired people who are looking for a way to become more connected to their communities. The Delta, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania models will all generate further information about how to design and manage part-time participants most effectively.

Even in a diverse, decentralized network, there should be ways to gain some of the benefits of participation in a common nationally recognized effort. At a minimum, all service could be done through programs that meet standards for quality of service, and all volunteers, whatever their local program affiliation, might serve under a common name. (In the recent Commission hearings, the Young People's National Service Coalition suggested Ameri-Corps, and others have suggested Serve America, a term already found in the Act). All volunteers could be eligible for awards for service "above and beyond the call of duty." (President Bush has recently established Presidential Youth Service Awards—along the lines of Presidential Physical Fitness Awards—under which honorees receive a pin, a certificate, and an invitation to recognition ceremonies.)

More substantively, all could receive some common training ingredients such as those being developed by the Subtitle D grantees. Training might include common core elements such as leadership development, team and community building, physical conditioning, and most importantly, citizenship. In addition, volunteers from different programs in the same area could get together for periodic week-end service projects and service learning reflection.

4. ***What work would volunteers do?*** The four areas set out in Subtitle D of the Act—education, human services, public safety and the environment—seem to comprise an amply broad umbrella, as the wide range of service opportunities found in our eight national service models indicates. Numerous studies suggest that there are enough useful service assignments in these areas to busy more than 3 million full-time servers; chart 6.6 summarizes the findings from one such study conducted for the Ford Foundation. The programs already established provide a good deal of information about what work various kinds of volunteers can do well, and the eight national service tests will provide much more.

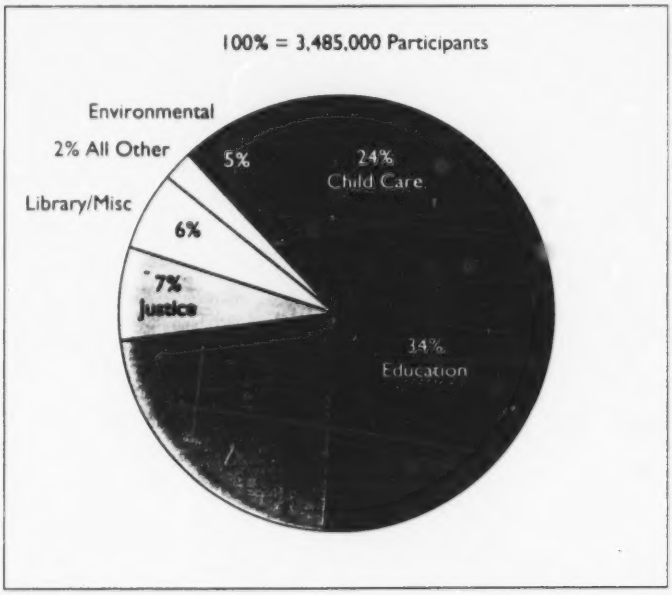
An important premise of the Act is that participants would provide needed services that would not otherwise be provided, and so they should not displace currently employed workers. Congress may want to consider whether or not the prevailing wage criteria established by the Davis-Bacon law and other federal labor standards could be modified to provide minimum exemptions for youth corps workers and other national service workers.

5. ***Should service be mandatory or voluntary?*** We are convinced that participation in national service should be voluntary, even though we acknowledge that for diversity's sake, it would be ideal if participation is widespread, ultimately approaching universal. Participants are likely to be most committed and effective when they have made a positive decision to volunteer. By imposing a constant market test, the voluntary approach

Chart 6.6

Potential Need For/Use of National Service Participants

Ford Foundation Study



Source: *National Service: What Would It Mean?*, Richard Danzig, Peter Szanton, D.C. Heath & Co., Lexington, Mass., 1986, p. 41

diminishes the chance that national service will become bureaucratic, outdated, or harmful to the community and the participants. It also eliminates the costs—social and political, as well as financial—associated with a draft.

We have much to learn before undertaking anything on the scale required to absorb the close to 3 million 18-year-olds in this country not presently involved in military or civilian service. We need to better understand what capacity our communities have for absorbing large numbers of people in well-structured service and what it would take to expand this capacity. We need to understand what types of programs are best suited to place these volunteers, and the impacts on their subsequent career plans. We need to demonstrate that a national service network can be worth the significant investment required by both the federal government and the local communities.

A risk of the voluntary approach is that some of the affluent may opt out. However, we believe that many of the better-off will be motivated to serve—wanting to do their patriotic duty like everyone else, and attracted by specific service opportunities or the chance for personal growth. This belief is supported in part by strong volunteer programs at several elite universities that experience 70% participation rates. All of our Subtitle D grantees will be collecting information on who volunteers and why.

6. ***Should full-time participants in national service receive stipends?*** We recognize that most community service is done without compensation; it is performed because the volunteers involved see a community need and want to help meet it. But in our view, volunteers should receive stipends, if needed, for programs of full-time and equivalent part-time service. Volunteers must have enough to live on, or the opportunity to serve will be available only to the wealthy. VISTA, the Peace Corps, and numerous local and private programs provide ample evidence that a modest stipend does not undermine the service ethic.

In principle, stipends need to be high enough to remove financial barriers to service. Within the bounds of this principle, we think it appropriate for different program models to provide varying stipends—and existing programs have gone a long way toward demonstrating a practical range (see Chart 6.3).

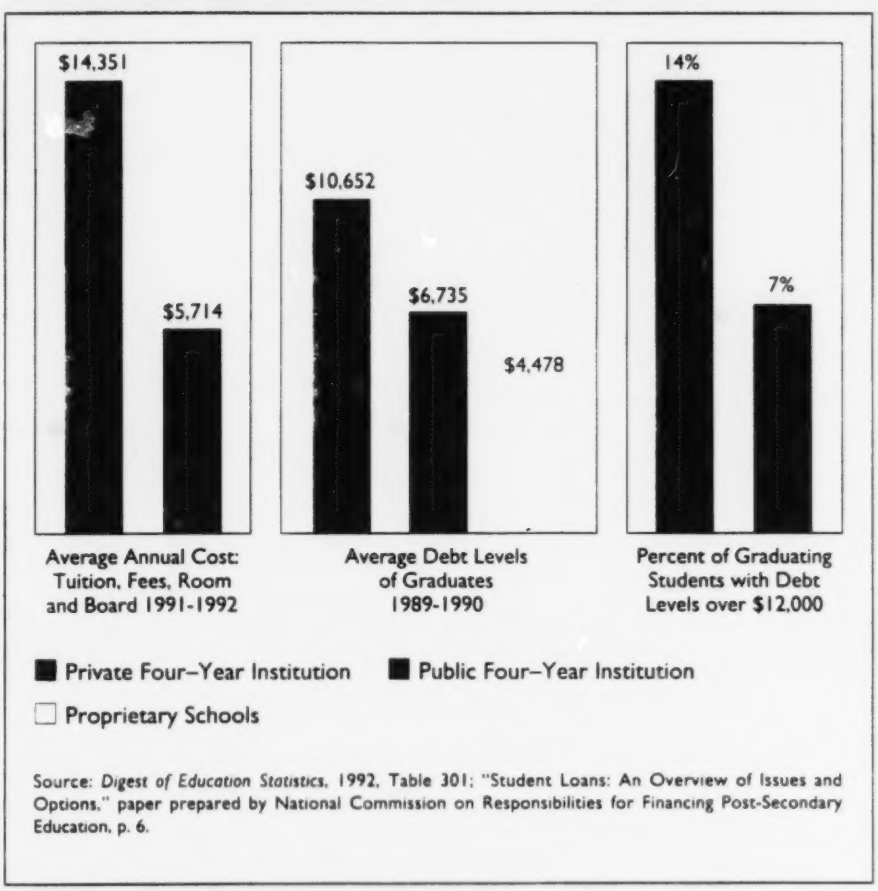
With respect to post-service benefits, Congress decided that the amount provided for in Subtitle D is a good starting point: Five thousand dollars that can be used for education, or a state-approved apprenticeship program, for each year of full-time service. Five thousand dollars is close to

the average annual cost of tuition, books, room and board at a public college or university and is sufficient to pay off the majority of debt of most graduating seniors. (See Chart 6.7 for details.) Such a benefit reinforces the volunteer's appreciation for the link between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and strengthens the nation by investing in his or her enhanced productive capacity. We will be able to observe the effect of that level of post-service benefit on participation in the eight models funded by the Commission. (For a program such as Teach For America, in which participants are paid market-level wages, consideration should be given to not providing a post-service benefit.)

Some have advocated a percentage-loan-forgiveness approach (such as that taken by the Perkins Loan Cancellation Program and the recently authorized Higher Education Act), which enables someone with a large educational debt to pay it off at the same rate as someone with a smaller debt. This approach helps ensure that those with large student loans will still consider the option of service. But a fixed sum has several advantages. It promotes equality among volunteers. It is more readily applicable to volunteers who earn the benefit in advance of their education. And it makes cost projection simpler and more reliable.

Chart 6.7

Costs/Debt Burdens for Higher Education



Source: *Digest of Education Statistics*, 1992, Table 301; "Student Loans: An Overview of Issues and Options," paper prepared by National Commission on Responsibilities for Financing Post-Secondary Education, p. 6.

7. ***How would national service be funded?*** Since national service may prove to serve both the national interest and provide direct benefits at the local level, the Act created a funding partnership between the federal government and the state or local community in which the service takes place. Furthermore, requiring that some funds come from local communities would ensure that they would become stakeholders, insisting on high quality service. We are impressed by the arguments of those who advocate that some share of the funds should come from the private sector, in order to encourage the kind of initiative and accountability that private institutions foster.

As illustrated by these corps members repairing a home damaged by Hurricane Hugo, service corps can be an invaluable asset for disaster relief.

To make this work, the match must be set at a level that does not hinder the state or community's ability to expand the program to appropriate scale. As an example for discussion, for non-federally operated programs the federal government might provide 50 percent matching grants for stipends and other program costs such as training and supervision, and 100 percent of the post-service benefit. This approach could capture the principle of a federal-local partnership, and that of a federal investment in the future productivity of a volunteer who has served the nation. Consideration might be given to providing federally-funded health coverage and other benefits such as day care.

The total cost for a national service network with 100,000 participants is estimated to be in the range of $2 billion, although assuming 50% matching requirements, the federal cost would be substantially less. This estimate is derived from the hypothetical breakdown of participants by kind of program that is shown in Chart 6.8. A staff discussion paper on national service expansion that is available upon request provides a more detailed look at this example and the costs to the federal government.

Not all of this cost would be new money. Under Subtitles C and D, the Commission is already spending $45 million on programs that would be a part of national service. In addition the government already spends over $250 million on federally operated service programs.[2] And the Congress

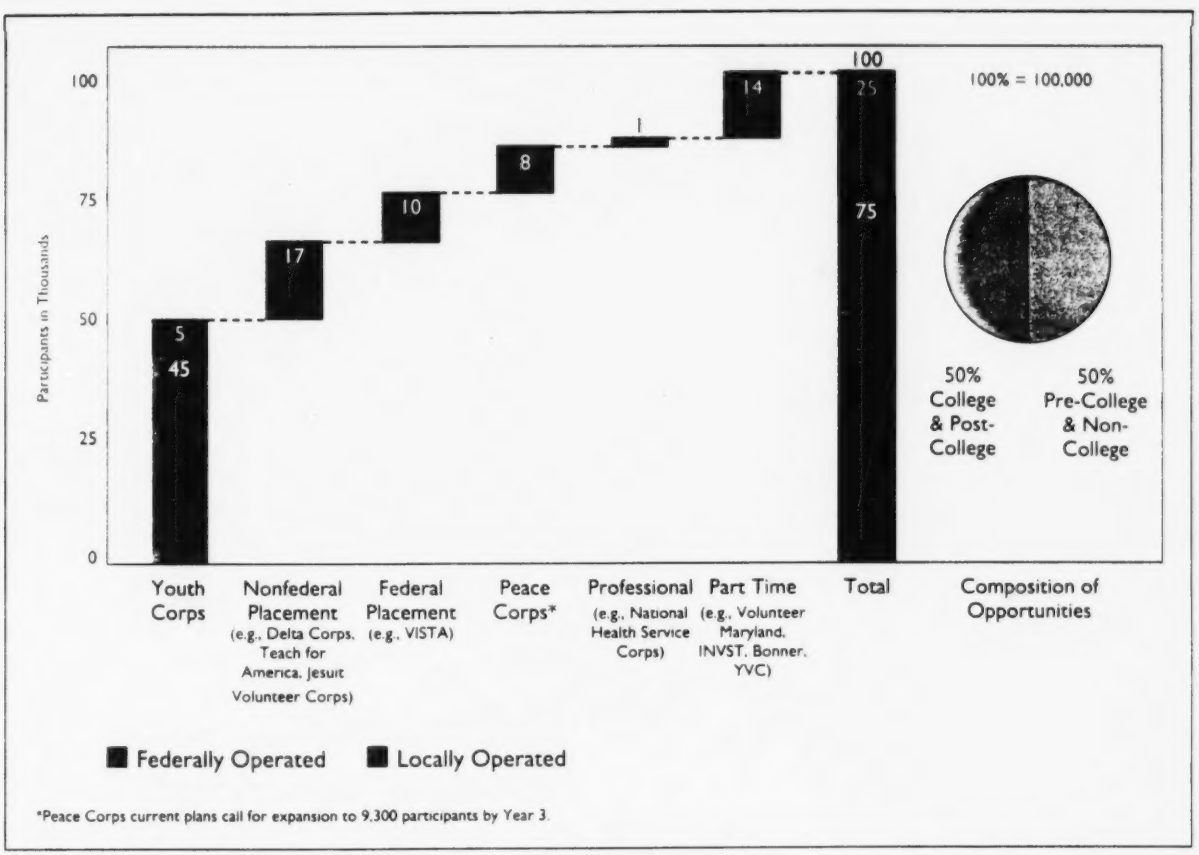
has authorized another $84 million in Defense appropriations for a new CCC, a National Guard Youth Corps, and funding for additional Commission programs. What's more, the Urban Revitalization Demonstration Program authorized in the fiscal year 1993 HUD Appropriations Act commits some portion of a $60 million fund to relevant programs. As discussed above in Chapter 4, college work-study funds could also help fund some of the part-time programs.

Managing Expansion Successfully

The feasibility of expansion depends critically on the capacity of established organizations and mechanisms to handle increasing work while maintaining high-quality performance, and the rate at which new pro-

Chart 6.8

Potential Distribution of National Service Opportunities - 100,000 Participants



*Peace Corps current plans call for expansion to 9,300 participants by Year 3.

grams and organizations can develop. It also depends on the willingness of private sources of funding, as well as state and local governments, to participate in funding the expansion. Our observation of current programs and our analysis of the main challenges lead us to believe that it would be feasible to expand the number of national service opportunities to approximately 100,000 within a few years, perhaps as little as three years after the necessary financial commitments are determined and written into law.

The rate of subsequent expansion would depend greatly on what was learned during this initial period. But in broad terms, a total size approximating the scale of the CCC in the 1930s—which attained a maximum of about 500,000 participants per year—might be feasible.

It would be feasible to expand the number of worthwhile national service opportunities to approximately 100,000 within a few years, perhaps as little as three years. A total size approximating the scale of the CCC in the 1930s—500,000 participants—might also be feasible.

In order to achieve such expansion successfully, at least four key challenges would have to be met:

1. ***Leadership development.*** Leadership at all levels is clearly a major determinant of the quality of service in any program. Whether it is the crew leader in a youth corps, or the regional director in a Teach For America program, or the campus volunteer coordinator, it is the individual leaders who make or break the service experience. That's why service leadership would need to become a profession in the same way that teaching and coaching are. Attractive career paths would be needed to retain good people in the field, and specialized training will have to be developed to meet the needs of the different types of programs. Increased salaries and basic benefits will need to be provided for key leadership positions such as corps crew leaders.

At the beginning of a period of expansion, special efforts will be required to expand the pool of qualified leaders. A network of 100,000 participants could require up to 20,000 service leaders at all levels. (Currently there may be approximately 5,000 service leaders.) Established service programs, colleges and universities, leadership training institutes, the military—all could contribute to reaching this level.

2. ***Program development.*** During a period of expansion, established programs would have to increase their capacity while maintaining quality. This poses numerous inter-connected challenges: Expanding qualified staff as rapidly as volunteers, developing satisfactory service assignments with a growing number of other institutions, recruiting more well-qualified volunteers with the right mix of backgrounds and training them adequately, raising increasing state, local and private funds required to match any federal funds being provided, establishing the administrative processes capable of handling increasing volumes of activity.

New programs would also have to be established. Both new and established programs would have to learn from experience, and from the results of evaluation being done for the Commission as well as past research and experience. All of this will require not only strong program leadership but also reliable and growing technical assistance resources and other kinds of outside help.

3. ***Training and support.*** Training of service leaders is only one component of the required training needs. Training and support will also be needed for the participants in the programs as well as for the supervisors in the agencies and community organizations where the participants will be serving. Many community organizations can help in this effort, While others would themselves need substantial help in preparing for the influx of new servers. The nation's network of Volunteer Centers could make a major contribution in this regard.

4. ***Network coordination.*** Even though the main action would be at the local level, both state-level and national-level leadership and coordination would help support the growth of a national and community service network. The Commission is glad to accept this challenge.

All of this is daunting. But baseline capacity exists at this point to build on, if Congress makes the decision to expand national service. The challenge then would be to make maximum use of available resources while generating more.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Interview with Jamie Merisotis, Executive Director, National Commission on Responsibilities for Financing Postsecondary Education, 1992.

[2] Includes full costs for VISTA, Peace Corps, and National Health Service Corps.

Building the Community Service Network

Chapter 7

This Detroit summer volunteer helped turn several vacant lots into a playground and a garden

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As the Commission has set forth in its strategic vision, we look forward to the day when community service is so integrated into the fabric of American life, involving thousands of institutions both public and private, that it engages millions of Americans in dealing with critical social problems. In the past year we have visited several places that provide clues to what that day might look like. One such place is Erie, Pennsylvania, an old industrial town and transportation center that, like many other cities, is trying to make its way back from industrial decline and inner-city deterioration.

The thirteen year-old boy at the front of the room, hair slicked down, spotless white go-to-church shirt, has the crowd in the palm of his hand. Of course, the crowd is mostly grandmothers, and the boy, Jerry Ricks, is every bit as cute as Macaulay Culkin. And it doesn't hurt that he's reading aloud from "I'll Love You Forever," one of the most unabashedly tear-jerking children's stories ever. By the time Jerry gets to the part where the mother has gotten too old and sick to rock her son on her knee anymore, the part where the son finally puts his mom on his knee and sings to her, well, you could have heard a grandmother dab her eyes. And that's what a lot of them are doing.

Nobody seemed to know or care that Jerry is a convicted robber.

It's all part of the story program run by Erie's Harborcreek Youth Services, a primarily residential program for delinquent boys. Most of them, who are usually sent to Harborcreek by a court for at least a year, are way behind in school, and the story program helps them catch up. Getting into the story program is one of the most sought-after privileges at Harborcreek. It means getting more time out of structured classes, it means getting to make choices and take road trips. It means, in the words of Alphonso Tate, a 16-year-old convicted of breaking and entering, "Finally, somebody is liking us and not saying, 'Get away from them, they're criminals!'"

It works like this: In a classroom setting, the boys read through a wide range of children's stories and pick their favorites. Then they design and draw storyboards or puppet-like figures that illustrate their selection. (While Jerry was reading his story, one of his classmates was inside their special booth with the cut-out "stage," working the puppets.) Then the guys take their show on the road, performing at schools, nursing homes, facilities for the physically and mentally disabled, even for the judges who sent them to Harborcreek in the first place.

Community service is for everyone.

Christine Webster
Age 13, 8th grade student,
at Commission hearings,
Washington, D.C.

Jerry's performance illustrated a particularly nice loop in the chain: He was part of the entertainment at a recognition luncheon for Erie's Foster Grandparents (a program administered by ACTION), many of whom work at Harborcreek as classroom grandmas.

Notice what is going on here: Service is linking up a school with other schools, hospitals, the courts, and a volunteer organization in a way that helps each one of them accomplish its goals. The results can be exponentially greater than if the individual organizations tried to go it alone. At its best, service forges such linkages and benefits from them.

Wonderfully enough, although only a city of 276,000, Erie provides more than one example of this point. In Erie every public school has been "adopted" by some local business, which provides tutors, pen pals, company tours, and helps with fundraising, and in return gets a better-educated, more community-oriented work force. Still another example: when the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) purchased the old Emerson School building to house its education division, it hired eleven people from GECAC Summer Youth Service Corps and from the Erie Youth Conservation Corps to completely renovate the facility, which was in horrendous shape. A few months later, several of those very corps member were being tutored in that building—some by students from Edinboro State University of Pennsylvania and Gannon University, who also help out in local elementary schools

The Commission's vision for America is for every institution in every community to incorporate service into its daily activities in the way the best ones in Erie do. Service is already as American as apple pie, but this is the way it will become as widely available.

Community service networks such as the one forming in Erie don't appear by magic; people and organizations work constantly to build them. How can these networks multiply and grow stronger? In its strategic vision, the Commission set out three strategies:

- Encouraging, recognizing and replicating promising community service programs
- Building needed organizational infrastructure
- Ensuring effective leadership

National service is not another program separate from other national priorities like public works and AIDS. National service is a process—a way to get our priorities done.

Martha Diepenbrock
Director
Los Angeles Conservation Corps

Viewed more broadly, these are requirements for the development of a strong network of community service opportunities.

The previous chapters have discussed the development of promising programs. This chapter focuses on the organizational infrastructure and the leadership required to develop a strong community service network.

People and Infrastructure

In order to support a large and varied network of community service opportunities, the country needs a multi-faceted organizational infrastructure—of the kind that sustains the private and independent sector. The paragraphs below first sketch the support services needed at local, state, regional, and national levels, and then outline the funding infrastructure required to develop and sustain the network.

A perfect match: senior citizens and kids each needing friends.

Local

The Volunteer Centers program of the Points of Light Foundation has identified seven essential elements of an effective community infrastructure: a community leadership coalition, a United Way and a community foundation, a Volunteer Center, specialized councils of community service organizations with common interests (such as heads of corporate volunteer programs or leaders of youth-serving organizations), information and referral services for people seeking services, and media attuned to volunteer service.

Many localities have the beginnings of such a community infrastructure in place. To experiment with one way to encourage their further development, the Commission has recently decided to establish a program to provide small matching grants to community foundations, which - in many places - have the knowledge and relationships to play catalytic roles. These locally based foundations could identify and help support small

grassroots service programs that address important needs and offer service opportunities to people not reached by other programs, and could work with local community service leaders in developing other aspects of the local infrastructure.

State

We have observed that states with public-private alliances of community service leaders and offices of community service generally seem to have the best developed networks of community service opportunities. The alliances are helpful in triggering inter-program collaboration, in stimulating and supporting additional local initiatives, and in seeking favorable state government policies. The state offices encourage local programs and help them deal with problems, bring leaders together, and help state agencies make effective use of community service.

To stimulate the development of needed state-level infrastructure, the Commission, in its grant process, encouraged states to create broad-based advisory committees and to seek widespread input. The states had only a few months before the submission of their applications, and so the first-year experience was understandably mixed. Some state agencies appear to have drawn relatively little on established community service programs and leaders, or on young people involved in service. However, in other states, people and organizations involved in community service came together for the first time. As a result, a few states prepared outstanding plans, more produced good ones, and some began the kind of public-private, state-local collaboration likely to bear fruit in future years. The Commission has recently awarded a technical assistance grant to Youth Service America, a youth service advocacy organization with considerable state-level expertise, to provide technical assistance regarding the development and implementation of state plans.

First, we must change people's attitudes. Second, we must identify what is working. Third, we must discover and develop new leaders. Fourth, we must reduce barriers, and fifth, we must build infrastructure to link people who want to serve with service opportunities.

C. Gregg Petersmeyer
Director
White House Office of National Service,
at Commission hearings,
Washington, D.C.

Regional and National

Organizational infrastructure is needed at national and regional levels too. In particular, a vital, growing community service movement will be dependent for its success on a range of knowledge-based efforts:

1. ***Information and referral centers*** to assist leaders of service programs and people who want to create new ones. Foundations have contributed to the development of several resource centers, such as the National Center for Service Learning in Early Adolescence in New York and the Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles. The Commission's leader states initiatives and its planned clearinghouse focused on service learning for school-age children will help augment such resources, and a grant to the

National Center for Risk Management and Insurance will enable that organization to help program managers with liability issues.

2. ***Hands-on helpers*** to work in the field with program leaders - providers of technical assistance, consultants, advocates of particular service needs and approaches. Leader organizations such as Youth Service America, National Association of Service and Conservation Corps, Campus Outreach Opportunity League, and Campus Compact are providing such support services, aided by Commission grants. As the community service field develops, new sources of assistance will emerge in response to the demands of local programs.

3. ***Training programs*** to help develop leaders for the expanding community service sector, as well as to train other participants. The quality of leadership in all kinds of service organizations is almost certainly the most important single determinant of the quality of service performed and of the participants' service experience. Most of the grants mentioned above have leadership development elements, and the Commission is exploring additional initiatives concerning the development of leaders for the field. In addition, we are arranging a series of regional service learning workshops for Commission grantees.

4. ***Research and evaluation organizations*** to probe more deeply and systematically into what is working and what is failing, and why. The Commission's evaluation contractor will contribute to this purpose.

Service to the nation can solve many problems, involve itself in many areas, but it will also serve the server. It can enlarge a person's expectations of himself or herself and it can enlarge our expectations of our country.

▼

Actor Richard Dreyfuss
at Commission hearings,
Los Angeles

Funding

Finally, in addition to the infrastructure of support services outlined above, the community service network needs funders. Even though community service participants are usually unpaid or only modestly stipended, well-designed and well-supervised programs are essential to worthwhile service, and these cost money. In the community service field, there are several important sources of operating funds:

- ***Institutions whose missions are supported by community service work.*** In some cases a share of the operating funds for community service programs comes from the budgets of organizations that benefit from the work. For example, community service in the parks and forests is often funded by the agencies responsible for maintaining and improving these resources.

- ***Public agencies as well as private organizations concerned with youth development.*** Some schools, youth authorities, job training organizations, foundations, and the multitude of other youth-serving organizations devote a portion of their budgets to programs that engage their youth populations in service.
- ***City, state and federal governments.*** Some governments such as Minnesota and California use special youth-service levies to fund the clean-up and recycling services of youth corps. These are significant funding sources for operating programs.
- ***Corporations and citizen donors.*** Those corporations and citizens that contribute substantially to efforts addressing serious problems in their localities, strengthen bonds of community, while investing in the development of the employees and citizens of tomorrow.

In the business sector, venture capital firms have proven valuable in choosing the most promising new ventures for investment, working with startup enterprises, monitoring progress, and deciding which ventures to back further and which to cut off. In this field, "community service venture investors" could develop considerable knowledge in a defined area such as national service models, decide which new service initiatives to invest in, and provide continuing counsel to their leaders. This is somewhat similar to the role that National Youth Leadership Council is playing with the generator schools mentioned in Chapter 3, or the role that Campus Compact is playing with its member institutions, mentioned in Chapter 4. This sort of venture funding is indeed one of the main responsibilities assigned to the Commission by the Act.

These AFSCME union members recycle aluminium and donate the proceeds to local charities.

In addition to federal funds, these venture investors could attract money for innovations from foundations, perhaps states and others. Over time, the government and other funders could evaluate their track records to learn which had spawned the highest proportion of successful and valuable new programs, and rely more on those who had done well.

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Leadership

The challenge the nation faces is to assist, encourage, and reward leadership wherever it emerges. The Commission has only taken a few early steps in this area.

Grassroots Initiative

At a recent protest in Harlem against police violence and neighborhood rioting, eighth grader Alexandra Alvarez got up on the spur of the moment and made a speech about the need for community residents to get along with the police. Subsequently, with support from her school, the public Community Service Academy, she and several other 13-year-olds created a "Peace Team" to promote better relations between the police and the community. Last December, after negotiating with the Community Planning board and the local precinct, they hosted 60 police officers in their school for one week. Thirty students and their parents taught Spanish to the police and acted out a series of open–ended skits that they then asked the officers to finish. For the first time ever parents and children talked openly, fact to face with the cops about their fears and concerns. Alexandra is not alone. Earlier chapters have noted other exceptional instances of youth leadership—such as Selvin Chambers at City Year, Lisa Kelly at Notre Dame, and Rachel Vaughn at Western Washington University. Each of these young people took initiative rooted in personal conviction, but equally, each was a product of community service experience that had reinforced their convictions and had built the confidence and competence to act on them.

By calling on people to share of themselves, community service tends to encourage leadership initiative. The best programs build on this by inviting participants to take on responsibility and by offering leadership training and coaching. In all program areas, the Commission is encouraging explicit leadership development activities.

Every one of the programs highlighted in this report is itself the product of entrepreneur-like leadership—for example, by principal Linda Jenkins at Washington Elementary, professor Ira Harkavy at Penn, directors Martha Diepenbrock at the Los Angeles Conservation Corps and Joanna Lennon at the East Bay Conservation Corps. The same can be said of the establishment of key infrastructure organizations such as Jim Kielsmeier's work with NYLC.

As the community service field grows, it must find ways to leverage the talents of its established leaders and to create opportunities for many more to emerge. The leader-state grants in the K-12 Serve America program, the new corps mentors in the youth corps area, and the Commission's new Senior Fellows program all aim at this, and we are exploring further boosts to leadership development. Youth Service America, COOL, and other organizations are also helping to meet this challenge. Longer term, the community service field will need to increase formal leadership development activities through some combination of college programs, community service leadership training, and special leadership development responsibilities taken on by some operating programs.

State Government

Leadership from within state government can also make a big difference. It is especially important in view of the Act's requirement that the Commission work in partnership with states.

John Briscoe, director of the Pennsylvania State Service Agency, PennSERVE, is one good illustration of what a state official can do, even with quite limited resources. For example, in 1988 the legislature appropriated $500,000 to promote community service in schools. Briscoe announced minigrants of $5,000 or less for schools willing to launch service learning innovations, and then he began a campaign of saturation communication, tireless visiting and encouragement, and lots of training. He put every interested school on the mailing list, the rejected applicants as well as the accepted ones, and faithfully sent them something on service learning every month. When he visited an area, he pulled the applicants there together and encouraged them to create a shared learning network; later on, he provided some smaller minigrants for teachers to initiate and support such networks. Briscoe says that "about a quarter of the school minigrants don't end up with anything permanent, and another quarter result in a small, isolated program with no contagion. But at least a quarter result in really neat stuff that is spreading like wildfire, and each year all but the very weakest applications are better than all but the very best the year before."

In 1989, the Legislature agreed to appropriate $500,000 to establish a state Literacy Corps. Briscoe's staff offered startup grants for colleges willing to start Corps; they were in constant communication with people in the field, made frequent visits, and put on numerous literacy training workshops. Today, 14 of the first 16 Corps established are fully institutionalized components of the curriculum, with all funding provided by the colleges. By contrast, few of the federally-funded Literacy Corps created at

It is really funny how your idea of what it means to serve changes over time. At first I wanted to do everything I could to help someone. And then I learned that wasn't enough. I had to teach people how to help themselves. Now I want to show them what it means to help someone else.

Linda Bayes
Students for Appalachia,
Berea College

the same time remain. Why? "Federal programs adhere too much to the pixie dust theory of change," declares Briscoe. "They scatter money and think that will change behavior. They just don't understand all the other things that make the difference—communicating and cheerleading, finding and helping the zealots, training, visiting...."

In these initiatives and others, Briscoe received dependable political support from Governor Robert Casey and from Harris Wofford, now a U.S. Senator but then Briscoe's boss as Secretary of Labor and Industry.

What lessons emerge from Pennsylvania's story? First of all, leadership at several levels, working cooperatively, is needed for major change. Second, sustained attention and effort are often key to getting results. Briscoe had a broad vision of where he wanted to go and he focused overwhelming attention and energy on getting there. He communicated the vision tirelessly through many channels, identified the champions and zealots and made common cause with them, spending large amounts of time in the field encouraging them, sharing ideas and troubleshooting. Briscoe constantly reached out to draw more people into mutually productive endeavors, and he let failures pass while celebrating achievements, all the while enlarging the vision.

In government, people tend to think most about policies and programs, budgets and appropriations, and all of these things are important. But they only come alive through the efforts of committed leaders. Briscoe's style of leadership may be different from that of many government officials, but it is by no means unique in the community service field. We are hopeful that the Commission's grants to state governments will provide the stimulus for leaders in many other states to seek similar impacts.

Leveraging Leadership

The social problems we face cannot be reversed without greater leaders, nor can they be addressed without many more people helping people. Helping to solve them is a responsibility of every citizen and the three sectors of our society—government, profit, and voluntary. Above all, it will require bipartisan, nonpartisan leadership nationally, and in states and local communities. The President is our most influential leader and he should establish the pattern by inviting his predecessors and governors and mayors to join him in this effort.

Each local leadership coalition should see that its community is benefiting from two things: 1) the proven infrastructure needed to mobilize people, resources, and media support; and 2) successful local problem solving methods. Remember, every social problem is being solved somewhere.

—Former Michigan Governor and
current Commission Board member
George Romney

Federal Government

The President, supported by top Cabinet officers and agency heads, could make a crucial contribution by placing community service squarely on the agenda for national renewal, and engaging both public and private sectors in pursuing this priority. Several initiatives would help achieve this result:

1. ***Engaging the leaders of our major institutions in community service leadership***—a united attack on our critical problems, drawing fully on the power of direct citizen involvement in service. The President has a unique capacity to host White House conferences, attended by past Presidents and Congressional leaders of both parties, governors and mayors, the leaders of business, labor, and the independent sector, religious leaders, educational leaders, heads of national and community foundations, and leaders of exemplary community service organizations around the country—including young people. These participants would, in turn, exercise similar leadership within their institutions and sectors of activity, each taking responsibility to enlist their constituents in committed service aimed at dealing with our major social problems. The potential is considerable: In one survey, 60% of those encouraged by their employer to serve did so.[1]

Service is a common ground where all sorts of people can touch each other's lives.

2. ***Encouraging concrete initiatives by federal departments and agencies to make major use of community service approaches.*** The recent Housing and Urban Development requirement to make use of community service in rehabilitating public housing is one good example; the Department of

Agriculture's long-time support for 4-H is another. A few more: The Peace Corps encourages its volunteers to enter domestic community service after the completion of their overseas tour. And military commanders in the San Antonio area have encouraged troops on their bases to serve as mentors to local students. President Bush's November 5, 1992 Executive Order, following through on Section 182 of the Act, takes an important first step in requiring all agency heads to encourage their employees to engage in meaningful local service.

One innovative example of adult volunteers at work is that of the mentoring going on at Kelly Air Force Base. This program pairs up over 1,000 Air Force personnel with local school children for weekly activities.

3. ***Calling for all citizens to participate in an annual Serve America Day,*** when citizens in every community in America would work together, across ethnic and economic lines, in common service to strengthen their communities. This idea is stimulated by successful precedents: Youth Service America's "A Day in the Life of Youth Service;" Servathons held simultaneously this past year by City Year in Boston, New York Cares, and the East Bay Conservation Corps in Oakland; "Make a Difference Day," introduced by the Points of Light Foundation and *USA Today*; COOL's "Into the Streets;" and similar service days sponsored by other organizations. In these events, people of all kinds come together for one day of visible, collaborative service—a whole lot of cleaning up, a whole bunch of fun, and some new friends—and they come away with the motivation to engage in further service and the knowledge about how to do that. Moreover, servathons are often led by young people, so they are an opportunity for older adults to appreciate youth leadership. Some corporations, such as Timberland, use participation in the servathon as a kickoff for other corporate community service programs, and in some areas, the day has become a substantial fund-raising event for youth service programs.

This chapter has outlined alternative ways of building infrastructure and providing leadership for a growing effort in community service. Chapter 6 discussed an approach to the development of a substantial national service effort in America, and earlier chapters suggested ways of strengthening community service for school-age children, students in higher education, and youth corps member. Together, these initiatives would go a long way towards building a strong network of community service opportunities throughout the country.

If America is able to stimulate and support the development of a renewed ethic of civic responsibility and the expansion of community service opportunities along the lines sketched here, then young people—in fact, all Americans—will have ample answers to the question: What can you do for your country?

FOOTNOTE

[1] 1987 J.C. Penney national survey on volunteerism

Additional Views

What You Can Do For Your Country

Wayne Meisel
Commission Board Member

Ever since William James wrote the "Moral Equivalent of War" in 1910, our country has struggled to develop a comprehensive vision and program for national service. It is only recently, however, that we have begun to develop a comprehensive, clear, and attractive national service program that is capable of capturing the imagination of politicians and the American public.

Historically, national service has been defined as young people making a full-time commitment to serve. In that same spirit, this report to Congress defines national service as full-time service opportunities (or the part-time equivalent.) I believe this definition is limiting and represents an antiquated version of what national service is today.

National service is not limited to those who choose to serve full-time. All young people can serve. National service is not a program, it is a calling. National service is not for a select few, it is for everyone.

National service is:

- a vision that young people can make a difference
- a challenge to all young people, whether they are in college, grammar school, or have dropped out or graduated
- a statement to young people that they are valued
- an acknowledgment that idealism is the nature of youth
- a realization that youth can be as much at strength as they are at risk
- a common thread that connects all young people to a single purpose
- an idea that challenges and dispels the myth that young people are apathetic or that America is not the dream it used to be

The community service movement of the eighties has brought new life to the idea of national service. Yet, we must understand what lies behind this movement. This movement has been inspired, conceived and brought to life by elementary, junior high, high school, and college students, boy scouts and girl scouts and church youth groups, as well as participants in service corps and other full-time placements. To define national service as full-time service would be to ignore millions of people who have brought momentum to the community service movement.

Movements are not born in Washington, DC. In fact, by the time they reach our nation's capital, they have already happened. The youth service movement is no different. This movement was created by the millions of young people who have had the courage to disregard the stereotypes that label them as apathetic.

The Commission on National and Community Service was established to explore and gain an understanding of what national service was and to learn what worked and what didn't. We have studied models, listened to the public, and invested in programs so that we would come to understand what national service is, all so that we could in turn make suggestions to Congress, the President and the American people.

The concept of national service is at a crossroads. As this country moves forward towards defining a vision for national service and implementing a policy, we must turn to Congress and the President to help launch and support a national service policy that includes all those who have rekindled the American spirit and have reclaimed a sense of hope for this country.

George Romney
Commission Board Member

At present, national service, community service, and volunteer service are used interchangeably. For meaningful communication and dialogue it is important to define each one.

To me, national service is a volunteer service program compensated or uncompensated, funded and administered by the federal government. Volunteer service is a voluntary unpaid service. Community service is all other forms of voluntary service including the ones funded but not administered by this Commission. The most extensive, least costly, and most effective form of voluntary service in solving social problems is volunteer unpaid service. Our most honored citizens in peacetime should be those who give time and money because they care. It should be the objective of the other two forms of voluntary service to become bridges for their participants to become lifetime unpaid volunteers.

Jane A. Kenny
Director of ACTION
Ex-officio Member of the Commission

Youth activities are vital to the health and future of the country, but we should also be careful not to underplay the tremendous contributions being made throughout the country by public and private adult and senior volunteer programs. ACTION's Older American Volunteer Programs—Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Retired Senior Volunteers—are examples of publicly supported programs in this category. Private programs also flourish everywhere. These programs help form the system of volunteerism America has in place today, and they need to continue to grow in order to create a still stronger system in the future. Older Americans have clearly demonstrated over and over again their wish to be a part of national service, to give something back to their country.

The elder population is growing rapidly. At present, there are 20 million Americans over 65, approximately 12 percent of the population. In a generation, the proportion of elders in the population is expected nearly to double, reaching 20 percent by the year 2030. A 1982 Louis Harris poll found that 5.9 million elders, a quarter of the population over 65, were engaged in volunteer activities and that an additional 2.1 million would like to be. A more recent survey found that 41 percent of the senior respondents were volunteers.

Healthy adolescent development does not occur in a vacuum; an essential ingredient is the presence of adults who interact with young people directly in positive ways. Older volunteer programs already contribute to this objective in major ways, and there are opportunities to do more. We should tangibly invite the participation of older Americans in community service and advocate a strengthened structure for such participation.

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CREDITS

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Commission on National
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529 14th Street, N.W.
Suite 452
Washington, D.C. 20045
202•724-0600 ▼ Fax 202•724-0608